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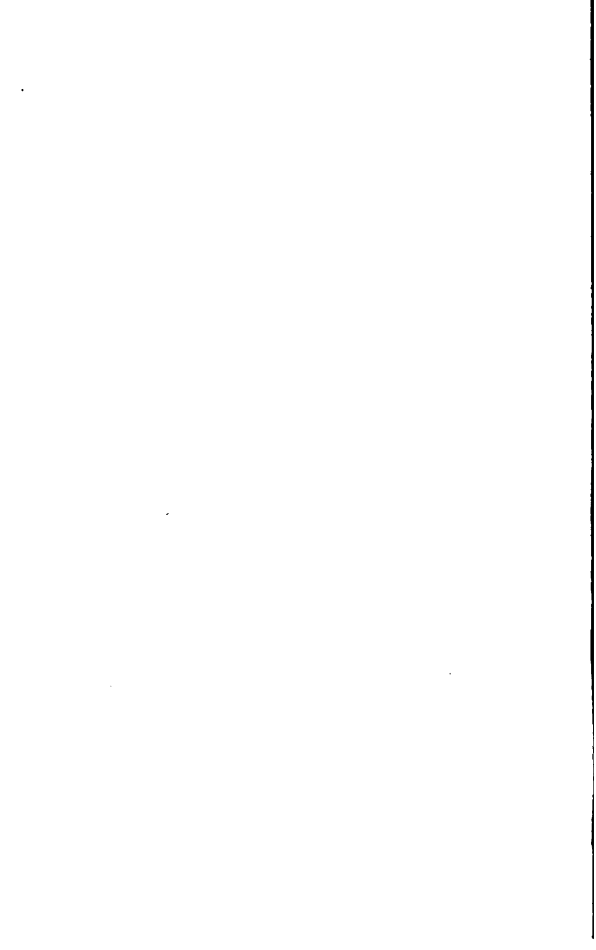


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Emerson





Modern Classics.

CULTURE, BEHAVIOR, BEAUTY.

BOOKS, ART, ELOQUENCE.

POWER, WEALTH, ILLUSIONS.

BY

RALPH WALDO EMERSON.



BOSTON:

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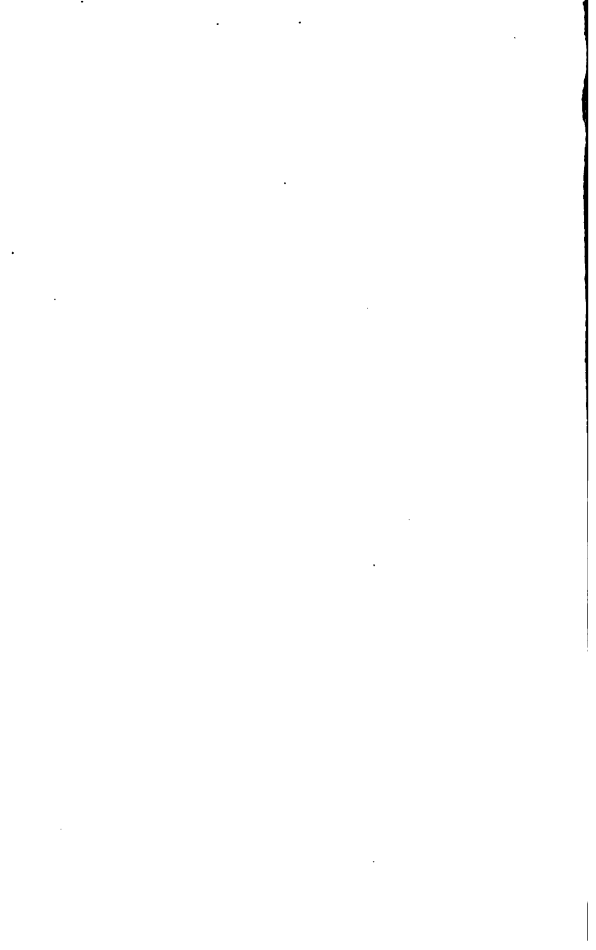
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CULTURE, BEHAVIOR, BEAUTY.







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CULTURE.

CAN rules or tutors educate
The semigod whom we await?
He must be musical,
Tremulous, impressional,
Alive to gentle influence
Of landscape and of sky,
And tender to the spirit-touch
Of man's or maiden's eye:
But, to his native centre fast,
Shall into Future fuse the Past,
And the world's flowing fates in his own mould recast.

.. . . .







CULTURE.

THE word of ambition at the present day is Culture. Whilst all the world is in pursuit of power, and of wealth as a means of power, culture corrects the theory of success. A man is the prisoner of his power. A topical memory makes him an almanac; a talent for debate, a disputant; skill to get money makes him a miser, that is, a beggar. Culture reduces these inflammations by invoking the aid of other powers against the dominant talent, and by appealing to the rank of powers. It watches success. For performance, Nature has no mercy, and sacrifices the performer to get it done; makes a dropsy or a tympany of him. If she wants a thumb, she makes one at the cost of arms and legs, and any excess of power in one part is usually

paid for at once by some defect in a contiguous part.

Our efficiency depends so much on our concentration, that Nature usually, in the instances where a marked man is sent into the world, overloads him with bias, sacrificing his symmetry to his working power. It is said, no man can write but one book; and if a man have a defect, it is apt to leave its impression on all his performances. If she creates a policeman like Fouché, he is made up of suspicions and of plots to circumvent them. "The air," said Fouché, "is full of poniards." The physician Sanctorius spent his life in a pair of scales, weighing his food. Lord Coke valued Chaucer highly, because the Canon Yeman's Tale illustrates the statute *Hen. V. Chap. 4*, against alchemy. I saw a man who believed the principal mischiefs in the English state were derived from the devotion to musical concerts. A freemason, not long since, set out to explain to this country, that the principal cause of the success of General Washington was, the aid he derived from the freemasons.

But worse than the harping on one string, Nature has secured individualism, by giving

the private person a high conceit of his weight in the system. The pest of society is egotists. There are dull and bright, sacred and profane, coarse and fine egotists. 'Tis a disease that, like influenza, falls on all constitutions. In the distemper known to physicians as *chorea*, the patient sometimes turns round, and continues to spin slowly on one spot. Is egotism a metaphysical varioloid of this malady? The man runs round a ring formed by his own talent, falls into an admiration of it, and loses relation to the world. It is a tendency in all minds. One of its annoying forms is a craving for sympathy. The sufferers parade their miseries, tear the lint from their bruises, reveal their indictable crimes, that you may pity them. They like sickness, because physical pain will extort some show of interest from the by-standers, as we have seen children, who, finding themselves of no account when grown people come in, will cough till they choke, to draw attention.

This distemper is the scourge of talent, — of artists, inventors, and philosophers. Eminent spiritualists shall have an incapacity of putting their act or word aloof from them, and seeing it bravely for the nothing it is.

Beware of the man who says, "I am on the eve of a revelation." It is speedily punished, inasmuch as this habit invites men to humor it, and by treating the patient tenderly, to shut him up in a narrower selfism, and exclude him from the great world of God's cheerful fallible men and women. Let us rather be insulted, whilst we are insultable. Religious literature has eminent examples, and if we run over our private list of poets, critics, philanthropists, and philosophers, we shall find them infected with this dropsy and elephantiasis, which we ought to have tapped.

This goitre of egotism is so frequent among notable persons, that we must infer some strong necessity in nature which it subserves; such as we see in the sexual attraction. The preservation of the species was a point of such necessity, that Nature has secured it at all hazards by immensely overloading the passion, at the risk of perpetual crime and disorder. So egotism has its root in the cardinal necessity by which each individual persists to be what he is.

This individuality is not only not inconsistent with culture, but is the basis of it. Every valuable nature is there in its own right, and

the student we speak to must have a mother-wit invincible by his culture, which uses all books, arts, facilities, and elegances of intercourse, but is never subdued and lost in them. He only is a well-made man who has a good determination. And the end of culture is not to destroy this, God forbid ! but to train away all impediment and mixture, and leave nothing but pure power. Our student must have a style and determination, and be a master in his own specialty. But, having this, he must put it behind him. He must have a catholicity, a power to see with a free and disengaged look every object. Yet is this private interest and self so overcharged, that, if a man seeks a companion who can look at objects for their own sake, and without affection or self-reference, he will find the fewest who will give him that satisfaction ; whilst most men are afflicted with a coldness, an incuriosity, as soon as any object does not connect with their self-love. Though they talk of the object before them, they are thinking of themselves, and their vanity is laying little traps for your admiration.

But after a man has discovered that there are limits to the interest which his private

history has for mankind, he still converses with his family, or a few companions, — perhaps with half a dozen personalities that are famous in his neighborhood. In Boston, the question of life is the names of some eight or ten men. Have you seen Mr. Allston, Doctor Channing, Mr. Adams, Mr. Webster, Mr. Greenough? Have you heard Everett, Garrison, Father Taylor, Theodore Parker? Have you talked with Messieurs Turbinewheel, Summitlevel, and Lacofrupees? Then you may as well die. In New York, the question is of some other eight, or ten, or twenty. Have you seen a few lawyers, merchants, and brokers, — two or three scholars, two or three capitalists, two or three editors of newspapers? New York is a sucked orange. All conversation is at an end, when we have discharged ourselves of a dozen personalities, domestic or imported, which make up our American existence. Nor do we expect anybody to be other than a faint copy of these heroes.

Life is very narrow. Bring any club or company of intelligent men together again after ten years, and if the presence of some penetrating and calming genius could dispose them to frankness, what a confession of in-

samities would come up! The "causes" to which we have sacrificed, Tariff or Democracy, Whigism or Abolition, Temperance or Socialism, would show like roots of bitterness and dragons of wrath: and our talents are as mischievous as if each had been seized upon by some bird of prey, which had whisked him away from fortune, from truth, from the dear society of the poets, some zeal, some bias, and only when he was now gray and nerveless, was it relaxing its claws, and he awaking to sober perceptions.

Culture is the suggestion from certain best thoughts, that a man has a range of affinities, through which he can modulate the violence of any master-tones that have a droning preponderance in his scale, and succor him against himself. Culture redresses his balance, puts him among his equals and superiors, revives the delicious sense of sympathy, and warns him of the dangers of solitude and repulsion.

"T is not a compliment, but a disparagement to consult a man only on horses, or on steam, or on theatres, or on eating, or on books, and, whenever he appears, considerately to turn the conversation to the bantling he is known to fondle. In the Norse heaven of our fore-

fathers, Thor's house had five hundred and forty floors; and man's house has five hundred and forty floors. His excellence is facility of adaptation and of transition through many related points, to wide contrasts and extremes. Culture kills his exaggeration, his conceit of his village or his city. We must leave our pets at home, when we go into the street, and meet men on broad grounds of good meaning and good sense. No performance is worth loss of geniality. 'Tis a cruel price we pay for certain fancy goods called fine arts and philosophy. In the Norse legend, Allfadir did not get a drink of Mimir's spring (the fountain of wisdom), until he left his eye in pledge. And here is a pedant that cannot unfold his wrinkles, nor conceal his wrath at interruption by the best, if their conversation do not fit his impertinency, — here is he to afflict us with his personalities. 'Tis incident to scholars, that each of them fancies he is pointedly odious in his community. Draw him out of this limbo of irritability. Cleanse with healthy blood his parchment skin. You restore to him his eyes which he left in pledge at Mimir's spring. If you are the victim of your doing, who cares what you do?

We can spare your opera, your gazetteer, your chemic analysis, your history, your syllogisms. Your man of genius pays dear for his distinction. His head runs up into a spire, and instead of a healthy man, merry and wise, he is some mad dominie. Nature is reckless of the individual. When she has points to carry, she carries them. To wade in marshes and sea-margins is the destiny of certain birds, and they are so accurately made for this, that they are imprisoned in those places. Each animal out of its *habitat* would starve. To the physician, each man, each woman, is an amplification of one organ. A soldier, a locksmith, a bank-clerk, and a dancer could not exchange functions. And thus we are victims of adaptation.

The antidotes against this organic egotism are, the range and variety of attractions, as gained by acquaintance with the world, with men of merit, with classes of society, with travel, with eminent persons, and with the high resources of philosophy, art, and religion: books, travel, society, solitude.

The hardest sceptic who has seen a horse broken, a pointer trained, or who has visited a menagerie, or the exhibition of the Indus-

trious Fleas, will not deny the validity of education. "A boy," says Plato, "is the most vicious of all wild beasts"; and, in the same spirit, the old English poet Gascoigne says, "A boy is better unborn than untaught." The city breeds one kind of speech and manners; the back-country a different style; the sea, another; the army, a fourth. We know that an army which can be confided in may be formed by discipline; that, by systematic discipline, all men may be made heroes: Marshal Lannes said to a French officer, "Know, Colonel, that none but a poltroon will boast that he never was afraid." A great part of courage is the courage of having done the thing before. And, in all human action, those faculties will be strong which are used. Robert Owen said, "Give me a tiger, and I will educate him." 'Tis inhuman to want faith in the power of education, since to meliorate is the law of nature; and men are valued precisely as they exert onward or meliorating force. On the other hand, poltroonery is the acknowledging an inferiority to be incurable.

Incapacity of melioration is the only mortal distemper. There are people who can never understand a trope, or any second or expanded

sense given to your words, or any humor; but remain literalists, after hearing the music, and poetry, and rhetoric, and wit, of seventy or eighty years. They are past the help of surgeon or clergy. But even these can understand pitchforks and the cry of fire! and I have noticed in some of this class a marked dislike of earthquakes.

Let us make our education brave and preventive. Politics is an after-work, a poor patching. We are always a little late. The evil is done, the law is passed, and we begin the up-hill agitation for repeal of that of which we ought to have prevented the enacting. We shall one day learn to supersede politics by education. What we call our root-and-branch reforms of slavery, war, gambling, intemperance, is only medicating the symptoms. We ~~must~~ begin higher up, namely, in Education.

Our arts and tools give to him who can handle them much the same advantage over the novice, as if you extended his life, ten, fifty, or a hundred years. And I think it the part of good sense to provide every fine soul with such culture, that it shall not, at thirty or forty years, have to say, "This which I might do is made hopeless through my want of weapons."

But it is conceded that much of our training fails of effect; that all success is hazardous and rare; that a large part of our cost and pains is thrown away. Nature takes the matter into her own hands, and, though we must not omit any jot of our system, we can seldom be sure that it has availed much, or, that as much good would not have accrued from a different system.

Books, as containing the finest records of human wit, must always enter into our notion of culture. The best heads that ever existed, Pericles, Plato, Julius Cæsar, Shakspeare, Goethe, Milton, were well-read, universally educated men, and quite too wise to undervalue letters. Their opinion has weight, because they had means of knowing the opposite opinion. We look that a great man should be a good reader, or, in proportion to the spontaneous power should be the assimilative power. Good criticism is very rare, and always precious. I am always happy to meet persons who perceive the transcendent superiority of Shakspeare over all other writers. I like people who like Plato. Because this love does not consist with self-conceit.

But books are good only as far as a boy is

ready for them. He sometimes gets ready very slowly. You send your child to the schoolmaster, but 't is the school-boys who educate him. You send him to the Latin class, but much of his tuition comes, on his way to school, from the shop-windows. You like the strict rules and the long terms; and he finds his best leading in a by-way of his own, and refuses any companions but of his choosing. He hates the grammar and *Gradus*, and loves guns, fishing-rods, horses, and boats. Well, the boy is right; and you are not fit to direct his bringing up, if your theory leaves out his gymnastic training. Archery, cricket, gun and fishing-rod, horse and boat, are all educators, liberalizers; and so are dancing, dress, and the street-talk; and — provided only the boy has resources, and is of a noble and ingenuous strain — these will not serve him less than the books. He learns chess, whist, dancing, and theatricals. The father observes that another boy has learned algebra and geometry in the same time. But the first boy has acquired much more than these poor games along with them. He is infatuated for weeks with whist and chess; but presently will find out, as you did, that when he rises

from the game too long played, he is vacant and forlorn, and despises himself. Thenceforward it takes place with other things, and has its due weight in his experience. These minor skills and accomplishments, for example, dancing, are tickets of admission to the dress-circle of mankind, and the being master of them enables the youth to judge intelligently of much, on which, otherwise, he would give a pedantic squint. Landor said, "I have suffered more from my bad dancing, than from all the misfortunes and miseries of my life put together." Provided always the boy is teachable (for we are not proposing to make a statue out of punk), foot-ball, cricket, archery, swimming, skating, climbing, fencing, riding, are lessons in the art of power, which it is his main business to learn; — riding, specially, of which Lord Herbert of Cherbury said, "A good rider on a good horse is as much above himself and others as the world can make him. Besides, the gun, fishing-rod, boat, and horse constitute, among all who use them, secret freemasonries. They are as if they belonged to one club.

There is also a negative value in these arts. Their chief use to the youth is, not amuse-

ment, but to be known for what they are, and not to remain to him occasions of heartburn. We are full of superstitions. Each class fixes its eyes on the advantages it has not: the refined, on rude strength; the democrat, on birth and breeding. One of the benefits of a college education is, to show the boy its little avail. I knew a leading man in a leading city, who, having set his heart on an education at the university, and missed it, could never quite feel himself the equal of his own brothers who had gone thither. His easy superiority to multitudes of professional men could never quite countervail to him this imaginary defect. Balls, riding, wine-parties, and billiards pass to a poor boy for something fine and romantic, which they are not; and a free admission to them on an equal footing, if it were possible, only once or twice, would be worth ten times its cost, by undeceiving him.

I am not much an advocate for travelling, and I observe that men run away to other countries, because they are not good in their own, and run back to their own, because they pass for nothing in the new places. For the most part, only the light characters travel. Who are you that have no task to keep you

at home? I have been quoted as saying cap-
tious things about travel; but I mean to do
justice. I think, there is a restlessness in
our people, which argues want of character.
All educated Americans, first or last, go to
Europe;—perhaps, because it is their mental
home, as the invalid habits of this country
might suggest. An eminent teacher of girls
said, “The idea of a girl’s education is, what-
ever qualifies them for going to Europe.”
Can we never extract this tape-worm of Eu-
rope from the brain of our countrymen? One
sees very well what their fate must be. He
that does not fill a place at home, cannot
abroad. He only goes there to hide his in-
significance in a larger crowd. You do not
think you will find anything there which you
have not seen at home? The stuff of all
countries is just the same. Do you suppose,
there is any country where they do not scald
milkpans, and swaddle the infants, and burn
the brushwood, and broil the fish? What is
true anywhere is true everywhere. And let
him go where he will, he can only find so
much beauty or worth as he carries.

Of course, for some men, travel may be
useful. Naturalists, discoverers, and sailors

are born. Some men are made for couriers, exchangers, envoys, missionaries, bearers of despatches, as others are for farmers and workingmen. And if the man is of a light and social turn, and Nature has aimed to make a legged and winged creature, framed for locomotion, we must follow her hint, and furnish him with that breeding which gives currency, as sedulously as with that which gives worth. But let us not be pedantic, but allow to travel its full effect. The boy grown up on the farm, which he has never left, is said in the country to have had *no chance*, and boys and men of that condition look upon work on a railroad, or drudgery in a city, as opportunity. Poor country boys of Vermont and Connecticut formerly owed what knowledge they had to their peddling trips to the Southern States. California and the Pacific Coast is now the university of this class, as Virginia was in old times. "To have *some chance*," is their word. And the phrase "to know the world," or to travel, is synonymous with all men's ideas of advantage and superiority. No doubt, to a man of sense, travel offers advantages. As many languages as he has, as many friends, as many arts and

trades, so many times is he a man. A foreign country is a point of comparison, wherefrom to judge his own. One use of travel is, to recommend the books and works of home; (we go to Europe to be Americanized;) and another, to find men. For, as Nature has put fruits apart in latitudes, a new fruit in every degree, so knowledge and fine moral quality she lodges in distant men. And thus, of the six or seven teachers whom each man wants among his contemporaries, it often happens that one or two of them live on the other side of the world.

Moreover, there is in every constitution a certain solstice, when the stars stand still in our inward firmament, and when there is required some foreign force, some diversion or alterative to prevent stagnation. And, as a medical remedy, travel seems one of the best. Just as a man witnessing the admirable effect of ether to lull pain, and meditating on the contingencies of wounds, cancers, lock-jaws, rejoices in Dr. Jackson's benign discovery, so a man who looks at Paris, at Naples, or at London, says, "If I should be driven from my own home, here, at least, my thoughts can be consoled by the most prodigal amuse-

ment and occupation which the human race in ages could contrive and accumulate."

Akin to the benefit of foreign travel, the æsthetic value of railroads is to unite the advantages of town and country life, neither of which we can spare. A man should live in or near a large town, because, let his own genius be what it may, it will repel quite as much of agreeable and valuable talent as it draws, and, in a city, the total attraction of all the citizens is sure to conquer, first or last, every repulsion, and drag the most improbable hermit within its walls some day in the year. In town, he can find the swimming-school, the gymnasium, the dancing-master, the shooting-gallery, opera, theatre, and panorama; the chemist's shop, the museum of natural history; the gallery of fine arts; the national orators, in their turn; foreign travellers, the libraries, and his club. In the country, he can find solitude and reading, manly labor, cheap living, and his old shoes; moors for game, hills for geology, and groves for devotion. Aubrey writes, "I have heard Thomas Hobbes say, that, in the Earl of Devon's house, in Derbyshire, there was a good library and books enough for him, and his lordship

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stored the library with what books he thought fit to be bought. But the want of good conversation was a very great inconvenience, and, though he conceived he could order his thinking as well as another, yet he found a great defect. In the country, in long time, for want of good conversation, one's understanding and invention contract a moss on them, like an old paling in an orchard."

Cities give us collision. 'T is said, London and New York take the nonsense out of a man. A great part of our education is sympathetic and social. Boys and girls who have been brought up with well-informed and superior people show in their manners an inestimable grace. Fuller says, that "William, Earl of Nassau, won a subject from the King of Spain, every time he put off his hat." You cannot have one well-bred man, without a whole society of such. They keep each other up to any high point. Especially women; — it requires a great many cultivated women, — saloons of bright, elegant, reading women, accustomed to ease and refinement, to spectacles, pictures, sculpture, poetry, and to elegant society, in order that you should have one Madame de Staël. The head of a com-

mercial house or a leading lawyer or politician is brought into daily contact with troops of men from all parts of the country, and those too the driving-wheels, the business men of each section, and one can hardly suggest for an apprehensive man a more searching culture. Besides, we must remember the high social possibilities of a million of men. The best bribe which London offers to-day to the imagination is, that, in such a vast variety of people and conditions, one can believe there is room for persons of romantic character to exist, and that the poet, the mystic, and the hero may hope to confront their counterparts.

I wish cities could teach their best lesson, — of quiet manners. It is the foible especially of American youth, — pretension. The mark of the man of the world is absence of pretension. He does not make a speech; he takes a low business-tone, avoids all brag, is nobody, dresses plainly, promises not at all, performs much, speaks in monosyllables, hugs his fact. He calls his employment by its lowest name, and so takes from evil tongues their sharpest weapon. His conversation clings to the weather and the news, yet he

allows himself to be surprised into thought, and the unlocking of his learning and philosophy. How the imagination is piqued by anecdotes of some great man passing incognito, as a king in gray clothes, — of Napoleon affecting a plain suit at his glittering levee; of Burns, or Scott, or Beethoven, or Wellington, or Goethe, or any container of transcendent power, passing for nobody; of Epaminondas, “who never says anything, but will listen eternally”; of Goethe, who preferred trifling subjects and common expressions in intercourse with strangers, worse rather than better clothes, and to appear a little more capricious than he was. There are advantages in the old hat and box-coat. I have heard, that, throughout this country, a certain respect is paid to good broadcloth; but dress makes a little restraint: men will not commit themselves. But the box-coat is like wine: it unlocks the tongue, and men say what they think. An old poet says, —

“ Go far and go sparing,
For you ’ll find it certain,
The poorer and the baser you appear,
The more you ’ll look through still.” *

* Beaumont and Fletcher: *The Tamer Tamed*.

Not much otherwise Milnes writes, in the "Lay of the Humble," —

"To me men are for what they are,
They wear no masks with me."

'T is odd that our people should have, — not water on the brain, — but a little gas there. A shrewd foreigner said of the Americans, that, "whatever they say has a little the air of a speech." Yet one of the traits down in the books as distinguishing the Anglo-Saxon is, a trick of self-disparagement. To be sure, in old, dense countries, among a million of good coats, a fine coat comes to be no distinction, and you find humorists. In an English party, a man with no marked manners or features, with a face like red dough, unexpectedly discloses wit, learning, a wide range of topics, and personal familiarity with good men in all parts of the world, until you think you have fallen upon some illustrious personage. Can it be that the American forest has refreshed some weeds of old Pictish barbarism just ready to die out, — the love of the scarlet feather, of beads, and tinsel? The Italians are fond of red clothes, peacock plumes, and embroidery; and I remember one rainy morn-

ing in the city of Palermo, the street was in a blaze with scarlet umbrellas. The English have a plain taste. The equipages of the grandees are plain. A gorgeous livery indicates new and awkward city wealth. Mr. Pitt, like Mr. Pym, thought the title of *Mister* good against any king in Europe. They have piqued themselves on governing the whole world in the poor, plain, dark Committee-room which the House of Commons sat in, before the fire.

Whilst we want cities as the centres where the best things are found, cities degrade us by magnifying trifles. The countryman finds the town a chop-house, a barber's shop. He has lost the lines of grandeur of the horizon, hills and plains, and with them, sobriety and elevation. He has come among a supple, glib-tongued tribe, who live for show, servile to public opinion. Life is dragged down to a fracas of pitiful cares and disasters. You say the gods ought to respect a life whose objects are their own; but in cities they have betrayed you to a cloud of insignificant annoyances:—

“ Mirmidons, race féconde,
Mirmidons,

Enfin nous commandons ;
Jupiter livre le monde
Aux mirmidons, aux mirmidons." *

'T is heavy odds
Against the gods,
When they will match with myrmidons.
We spawning, spawning myrmidons,
Our turn to-day ! we take command,
Jove gives the globe into the hand
Of myrmidons, of myrmidons.

What is odious but noise, and people who scream and bewail ? people whose vane points always east, who live to dine, who send for the doctor, who coddle themselves, who toast their feet on the register, who intrigue to secure a padded chair, and a corner out of the draught. Suffer them once to begin the enumeration of their infirmities, and the sun will go down on the unfinished tale. Let these triflers put us out of conceit with petty comforts. To a man at work, the frost is but a color ; the rain, the wind, he forgot them when he came in. Let us learn to live coarsely, dress plainly, and lie hard. The least habit of dominion over the palate has

* Béranger.

certain good effects not easily estimated. Neither will we be driven into a quiddling abstemiousness. 'T is a superstition to insist on a special diet. All is made at last of the same chemical atoms.

A man in pursuit of greatness feels no little wants. How can you mind diet, bed, dress, or salutes or compliments, or the figure you make in company, or wealth, or even the bringing things to pass, when you think how paltry are the machinery and the workers ? Wordsworth was praised to me, in Westmoreland, for having afforded to his country neighbors an example of a modest household where comfort and culture were secured, without display. And a tender boy who wears his rusty cap and outgrown coat, that he may secure the coveted place in college, and the right in the library, is educated to some purpose. There is a great deal of self-denial and manliness in poor and middle-class houses, in town and country, that has not got into literature, and never will, but that keeps the earth sweet ; that saves on superfluities, and spends on essentials ; that goes rusty, and educates the boy ; that sells the horse, but builds the school ; works early and late, takes

two looms in the factory, three looms, six looms, but pays off the mortgage on the paternal farm, and then goes back cheerfully to work again.

We can ill spare the commanding social benefits of cities; they must be used; yet cautiously, and haughtily, — and will yield their best values to him who best can do without them. Keep the town for occasions, but the habits should be formed to retirement. Solitude, the safeguard of mediocrity, is to genius the stern friend, the cold, obscure shelter where moult the wings which will bear it farther than suns and stars. He who should inspire and lead his race must be defended from travelling with the souls of other men, from living, breathing, reading, and writing in the daily, time-worn yoke of their opinions. “In the morning, — solitude”; said Pythagoras; that Nature may speak to the imagination, as she does never in company, and that her favorite may make acquaintance with those divine strengths which disclose themselves to serious and abstracted thought. ’Tis very certain that Plato, Plotinus, Archimedes, Hermes, Newton, Milton, Wordsworth, did not live in a crowd, but

descended into it from time to time as benefactors; and the wise instructor will press this point of securing to the young soul in the disposition of time and the arrangements of living, periods and habits of solitude. The high advantage of university-life is often the mere mechanical one, I may call it, of a separate chamber and fire, — which parents will allow the boy without hesitation at Cambridge, but do not think needful at home. We say solitude, to mark the character of the tone of thought; but if it can be shared between two or more than two, it is happier, and not less noble. “We four,” wrote Neander to his sacred friends, “will enjoy at Halle the inward blessedness of a *civitas Dei*, whose foundations are forever friendship. The more I know you, the more I dissatisfy and must dissatisfy all my wonted companions. Their very presence stupefies me. The common understanding withdraws itself from the one centre of all existence.”

Solitude takes off the pressure of present importunities, that more catholic and humane relations may appear. The saint and poet seek privacy to ends the most public and universal; and it is the secret of culture, to

interest the man more in his public than in his private quality. Here is a new poem, which elicits a good many comments in the journals and in conversation. From these it is easy, at last, to eliminate the verdict which readers passed upon it; and that is, in the main, unfavorable. The poet, as a craftsman, is only interested in the praise accorded to him, and not in the censure, though it be just. And the poor little poet hearkens only to that, and rejects the censure, as proving incapacity in the critic. But the poet *cultivated* becomes a stockholder in both companies, — say Mr. Curfew, — in the Curfew stock, and in the *humanity* stock; and, in the last, exults as much in the demonstration of the unsoundness of Curfew, as his interest in the former gives him pleasure in the currency of Curfew. For, the depreciation of his Curfew stock only shows the immense values of the humanity stock. As soon as he sides with his critic against himself, with joy, he is a cultivated man.

We must have an intellectual quality in all property and in all action, or they are naught. I must have children, I must have events, I must have a social state and history, or

my thinking and speaking want body or basis. But to give these accessories any value, I must know them as contingent and rather showy possessions, which pass for more to the people than to me. We see this abstraction in scholars, as a matter of course; but what a charm it adds when observed in practical men! Bonaparte, like Cæsar, was intellectual, and could look at every object for itself, without affection. Though an egotist *à l'outrance*, he could criticise a play, a building, a character, on universal grounds, and give a just opinion. A man known to us only as a celebrity in politics or in trade, gains largely in our esteem if we discover that he has some intellectual taste or skill; as when we learn of Lord Fairfax, the Long Parliament's general, his passion for antiquarian studies; or of the French regicide Carnot, his sublime genius in mathematics; or of a living banker, his success in poetry; or of a partisan journalist, his devotion to ornithology. So, if in travelling in the dreary wildernesses of Arkansas or Texas, we should observe on the next seat a man reading Horace, or Martial, or Calderon, we should wish to hug him. In callings that require roughest

energy, soldiers, sea-captains, and civil engineers sometimes betray a fine insight, if only through a certain gentleness when off duty; a good-natured admission that there are illusions, and who shall say that he is not their sport? We only vary the phrase, not the doctrine, when we say that culture opens the sense of beauty. A man is a beggar who only lives to the useful, and, however he may serve as a pin or rivet in the social machine, cannot be said to have arrived at self-possession. I suffer, every day, from the want of perception of beauty in people. They do not know the charm with which all moments and objects can be embellished, the charm of manners, of self-command, of benevolence. Repose and cheerfulness are the badge of the gentleman, — repose in energy. The Greek battle-pieces are calm; the heroes, in whatever violent actions engaged, retain a serene aspect; as we say of Niagara, that it falls without speed. A cheerful, intelligent face is the end of culture, and success enough. For it indicates the purpose of nature and wisdom attained.

When our higher faculties are in activity, we are domesticated, and awkwardness and

discomfort give place to natural and agreeable movements. It is noticed, that the consideration of the great periods and spaces of astronomy induces a dignity of mind, and an indifference to death. The influence of fine scenery, the presence of mountains, appeases our irritations and elevates our friendships. Even a high dome, and the expansive interior of a cathedral, have a sensible effect on manners. I have heard that stiff people lose something of their awkwardness under high ceilings and in spacious halls. I think, sculpture and painting have an effect to teach us manners, and abolish hurry.

But, over all, culture must reinforce from higher influx the empirical skills of eloquence, or of politics, or of trade, and the useful arts. There is a certain loftiness of thought and power to marshal and adjust particulars, which can only come from an insight of their whole connection. The orator who has once seen things in their divine order will never quite lose sight of this, and will come to affairs as from a higher ground, and, though he will say nothing of philosophy, he will have a certain mastery in dealing with them, and an incapableness of being dazzled or frightened, which

will distinguish his handling from that of attorneys and factors. A man who stands on a good footing with the heads of parties at Washington reads the rumors of the newspapers, and the guesses of provincial politicians, with a key to the right and wrong in each statement, and sees well enough where all this will end. Archimedes will look through your Connecticut machine, at a glance, and judge of its fitness. And much more, a wise man who knows not only what Plato, but what Saint John can show him, can easily raise the affair he deals with to a certain majesty. Plato says, Pericles owed this elevation to the lessons of Anaxagoras. Burke descended from a higher sphere when he would influence human affairs. Franklin, Adams, Jefferson, Washington, stood on a fine humanity, before which the brawls of modern senates are but pothouse politics.

But there are higher secrets of culture, which are not for the apprentices, but for proficients. These are lessons only for the brave. We must know our friends under ugly masks. The calamities are our friends. Ben Jonson specifies in his address to the Muse:—

“Get him the time’s long grudge, the court’s ill-will,
And, reconciled, keep him suspected still,
Make him lose all his friends, and, what is worse,
Almost all ways to any better course ;
With me thou leav’st a better Muse than thee,
And which thou brought’st me, blessed Poverty.”

We wish to learn philosophy by rote, and play at heroism. But the wiser God says, Take the shame, the poverty, and the penal solitude, that belong to truth-speaking. Try the rough water as well as the smooth. Rough water can teach lessons worth knowing. When the state is unquiet, personal qualities are more than ever decisive. Fear not a revolution which will constrain you to live five years in one. Don’t be so tender at making an enemy now and then. Be willing to go to Coventry sometimes, and let the populace bestow on you their coldest contempts. The finished man of the world must eat of every apple once. He must hold his hatreds also at arm’s-length, and not remember spite. He has neither friends nor enemies, but values men only as channels of power. ?

He who aims high, must dread an easy home and popular manners. Heaven sometimes hedges a rare character about with ungainliness and odium, as the burr that protects

the fruit. If there is any great and good thing in store for you, it will not come at the first or the second call, nor in the shape of fashion, ease, and city drawing-rooms. Popularity is for dolls. "Steep and craggy," said Porphyry, "is the path of the gods." Open your Marcus Antoninus. In the opinion of the ancients, he was the great man who scorned to shine, and who contested the frowns of fortune. They preferred the noble vessel too late for the tide, contending with winds and waves, dismantled and unrigged, to her companion borne into harbor with colors flying and guns firing. There is none of the social goods that may not be purchased too dear, and mere amiableness must not take rank with high aims and self-subsistency.

Bettine replies to Goethe's mother, who chides her disregard of dress, "If I cannot do as I have a mind, in our poor Frankfort, I shall not carry things far." And the youth must rate at its true mark the inconceivable levity of local opinion. The longer we live, the more we must endure the elementary existence of men and women; and every brave heart must treat society as a child, and never allow it to dictate.

“All that class of the severe and restrictive virtues,” said Burke, “are almost too costly for humanity.” Who wishes to be severe? Who wishes to resist the eminent and polite, in behalf of the poor, and low, and impolite? and who that dares do it, can keep his temper sweet, his frolic spirits? The high virtues are not debonair, but have their redress in being illustrious at last. What forests of laurel we bring, and the tears of mankind, to those who stood firm against the opinion of their contemporaries! The measure of a master is his success in bringing all men round to his opinion twenty years later.

Let me say here, that culture cannot begin too early. In talking with scholars, I observe that they lost on ruder companions those years of boyhood which alone could give imaginative literature a religious and infinite quality in their esteem. I find, too, that the chance for appreciation is much increased by being the son of an appreciator, and that these boys who now grow up are caught not only years too late, but two or three births too late, to make the best scholars of. And I think it a presentable motive to a scholar, that, as, in an old community, a well-born proprietor is usu-

ally found, after the first heats of youth, to be a careful husband, and to feel a habitual desire that the estate shall suffer no harm by his administration, but shall be delivered down to the next heir in as good condition as he received it; — so, a considerate man will reckon himself a subject of that secular melioration by which mankind is mollified, cured, and refined, and will shun every expenditure of his forces on pleasure or gain, which will jeopardize this social and secular accumulation.

The fossil strata show us that nature began with rudimental forms, and rose to the more complex, as fast as the earth was fit for their dwelling-place; and that the lower perish, as the higher appear. Very few of our race can be said to be yet finished men. We still carry sticking to us some remains of the preceding inferior quadruped organization. We call these millions men; but they are not yet men. Half engaged in the soil, pawing to get free, man needs all the music that can be brought to disengage him. If Love, red Love, with tears and joy; if Want with his scourge; if War with his cannonade; if Christianity with its charity; if Trade with its money; if Art with its portfolios; if Science with her tele-

graphs through the deeps of space and time ; can set his dull nerves throbbing, and by loud taps on the tough chrysalis, can break its walls, and let the new creature emerge erect and free, — make way, and sing pæan ! The age of the quadruped is to go out, — the age of the brain and of the heart is to come in. The time will come when the evil forms we have known can no more be organized. Man's culture can spare nothing, wants all the material. He is to convert all impediments into instruments, all enemies into power. The formidable mischief will only make the more useful slave. And if one shall read the future of the race hinted in the organic effort of Nature to mount and meliorate, and the corresponding impulse to the Better in the human being, we shall dare affirm that there is nothing he will not overcome and convert, until at last culture shall absorb the chaos and gehenna. He will convert the Furies into Muses, and the hells into benefit.





BEHAVIOR.

GRACE, Beauty, and Caprice
Build this golden portal;
Graceful women, chosen men,
Dazzle every mortal:
Their sweet and lofty countenance
His enchanting food;
He need not go to them, their forms
Beset his solitude.
He looketh seldom in their face,
His eyes explore the ground,
The green grass is a looking-glass
Whereon their traits are found.
Little he says to them,
So dances his heart in his breast,
Their tranquil mien bereaveth him
Of wit, of words, of rest.
Too weak to win, too fond to shun
The tyrants of his doom,
The much-deceived Endymion
Slips behind a tomb.







BEHAVIOR.

 HE soul which animates Nature is not less significantly published in the figure, movement, and gesture of animated bodies, than in its last vehicle of articulate speech. This silent and subtile language is Manners; not *what*, but *how*. Life expresses. A statue has no tongue, and needs none. Good tableaux do not need declamation. Nature tells every secret once. Yes, but in man she tells it all the time, by form, attitude, gesture, mien, face, and parts of the face, and by the whole action of the machine. The visible carriage or action of the individual, as resulting from his organization and his will combined, we call manners. What are they but thought entering the hands and feet, con-

trolling the movements of the body, the speech and behavior?

There is always a best way of doing everything, if it be to boil an egg. Manners are the happy ways of doing things; each once a stroke of genius or of love, — now repeated and hardened into usage. They form at last a rich varnish, with which the routine of life is washed, and its details adorned. If they are superficial, so are the dew-drops which give such a depth to the morning meadows. Manners are very communicable: men catch them from each other. Consuelo, in the romance, boasts of the lessons she had given the nobles in manners, on the stage; and, in real life, Talma taught Napoleon the arts of behavior. Genius invents fine manners, which the baron and the baroness copy very fast, and, by the advantage of a palace, better the instruction. They stereotype the lesson they have learned into a mode.

The power of manners is incessant, — an element as unconcealable as fire. The nobility cannot in any country be disguised, and no more in a republic or a democracy, than in a kingdom. No man can resist their influence. There are certain manners which are learned

in good society, of that force, that, if a person have them, he or she must be considered, and is everywhere welcome, though without beauty, or wealth, or genius. Give a boy address and accomplishments, and you give him the mastery of palaces and fortunes where he goes. He has not the trouble of earning or owning them; they solicit him to enter and possess. We send girls of a timid, retreating disposition to the boarding-school, to the riding-school, to the ballroom, or wheresoever they can come into acquaintance and nearness of leading persons of their own sex; where they might learn address, and see it near at hand. The power of a woman of fashion to lead, and also to daunt and repel, derives from their belief that she knows resources and behaviors not known to them; but when these have mastered her secret, they learn to confront her, and recover their self-possession.

Every day bears witness to their gentle rule. People who would obtrude, now do not obtrude. The mediocre circle learns to demand that which belongs to a high state of nature or of culture. Your manners are always under examination, and by committees little suspected, — a police in citizens' clothes, — but

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are awarding or denying you very high prizes when you least think of it.

We talk much of utilities, — but 't is our manners that associate us. In hours of business, we go to him who knows, or has, or does this or that which we want, and we do not let our taste or feeling stand in the way. But this activity over, we return to the indolent state, and wish for those we can be at ease with; those who will go where we go, whose manners do not offend us, whose social tone chimes with ours. When we reflect on their persuasive and cheering force; how they recommend, prepare, and draw people together; how, in all clubs, manners make the members; how manners make the fortune of the ambitious youth; that, for the most part, his manners marry him, and, for the most part, he marries manners; when we think what keys they are, and to what secrets; what high lessons and inspiring tokens of character they convey; and what divination is required in us, for the reading of this fine telegraph, we see what range the subject has, and what relations to convenience, power, and beauty.

Their first service is very low, — when they are the minor morals; but 't is the beginning

of civility, — to make us, I mean, endurable to each other. We prize them for their rough-plastic, abstergent force; to get people out of the quadruped state; to get them washed, clothed, and set up on end; to slough their animal husks and habits; compel them to be clean; overawe their spite and meanness, teach them to stifle the base, and choose the generous expression, and make them know how much happier the generous behaviors are.

Bad behavior the laws cannot reach. Society is infested with rude, cynical, restless, and frivolous persons who prey upon the rest, and whom, a public opinion concentrated into good manners, forms accepted by the sense of all, can reach: — the contradictors and railers at public and private tables, who are like terriers, who conceive it the duty of a dog of honor to growl at any passer-by, and do the honors of the house by barking him out of sight: — I have seen men who neigh like a horse when you contradict them, or say something which they do not understand: — then the overbold, who make their own invitation to your hearth; the persevering talker, who gives you his society in large, saturating doses; the pitiers of themselves. — a perilous class; the frivolous As-

modeus, who relies on you to find him in ropes of sand to twist; the monotones; in short, every stripe of absurdity; — these are social inflictions which the magistrate cannot cure or defend you from, and which must be intrusted to the restraining force of custom, and proverbs, and familiar rules of behavior impressed on young people in their school-days.

In the hotels on the banks of the Mississippi, they print, or used to print, among the rules of the house, that “no gentleman can be permitted to come to the public table without his coat”; and in the same country, in the pews of the churches, little placards plead with the worshipper against the fury of expectoration. Charles Dickens self-sacrificingly undertook the reformation of our American manners in unspeakable particulars. I think the lesson was not quite lost; that it held bad manners up, so that the churls could see the deformity. Unhappily, the book had its own deformities. It ought not to need to print in a reading-room a caution to strangers not to speak loud; nor to persons who look over fine engravings, that they should be handled like cobwebs and butterflies’ wings; nor to persons who look at marble statues, that they shall not smite them

with canes. But, even in the perfect civilization of Boston, such cautions are not quite needless in the Athenæum and City Library.

Manners are factitious, and grow out of circumstance as well as out of character. If you look at the pictures of patricians and of peasants, of different periods and countries, you will see how well they match the same classes in our towns. The modern aristocrat not only is well drawn in Titian's Venetian doges, and in Roman coins and statues, but also in the pictures which Commodore Perry brought home of dignitaries in Japan. Broad lands and great interests not only arrive to such heads as can manage them, but form manners of power. A keen eye, too, will see nice gradations of rank, or see in the manners the degree of homage the party is wont to receive. A prince who is accustomed every day to be courted and deferred to by the highest grandees, acquires a corresponding expectation, and a becoming mode of receiving and replying to this homage.

There are always exceptional people and modes. English grandees affect to be farmers. Claverhouse is a fop, and, under the finish of dress, and levity of behavior, hides the terror of his war. But Nature and Destiny are hon-

est, and never fail to leave their mark, to hang out a sign for each and for every quality. It is much to conquer one's face, and perhaps the ambitious youth thinks he has got the whole secret when he has learned that disengaged manners are commanding. Don't be deceived by a facile exterior. Tender men sometimes have strong wills. We had, in Massachusetts, an old statesman, who had sat all his life in courts and in chairs of state, without overcoming an extreme irritability of face, voice, and bearing: when he spoke, his voice would not serve him; it cracked, it broke, it wheezed, it piped, — little cared he; he knew that it had got to pipe, or wheeze, or screech his argument and his indignation. When he sat down, after speaking, he seemed in a sort of fit, and held on to his chair with both hands: but underneath all this irritability was a puissant will, firm, and advancing, and a memory in which lay in order and method like geologic strata every fact of his history, and under the control of his will.

Manners are partly factitious, but, mainly, there must be capacity for culture in the blood. Else all culture is vain. The obstinate prejudice in favor of blood, which lies at the base of

the feudal and monarchical fabrics of the Old World, has some reason in common experience. Every man — mathematician, artist, soldier, or merchant — looks with confidence for some traits and talents in his own child, which he would not dare to presume in the child of a stranger. The Orientalists are very orthodox on this point. "Take a thorn-bush," said the emir Abdel-Kader, "and sprinkle it for a whole year with water; it will yield nothing but thorns. Take a date-tree, leave it without culture, and it will always produce dates. Nobility is the date-tree, and the Arab populace is a bush of thorns."

A main fact in the history of manners is the wonderful expressiveness of the human body. If it were made of glass, or of air, and the thoughts were written on steel tablets within, it could not publish more truly its meaning than now. Wise men read very sharply all your private history in your look and gait and behavior. The whole economy of nature is bent on expression. The tell-tale body is all tongues. Men are like Geneva watches with crystal faces which expose the whole movement. They carry the liquor of life flowing up and down in these beautiful bottles, and announcing

to the curious how it is with them. The face and eyes reveal what the spirit is doing, how old it is, what aims it has. The eyes indicate the antiquity of the soul, or through how many forms it has already ascended. It almost violates the proprieties, if we say above the breath here, what the confessing eyes do not hesitate to utter to every street passenger.

Man cannot fix his eye on the sun, and so far seems imperfect. In Siberia, a late traveller found men who could see the satellites of Jupiter with their unarmed eye. In some respects the animals excel us. The birds have a longer sight, beside the advantage by their wings of a higher observatory. A cow can bid her calf, by secret signal, probably of the eye, to run away, or to lie down and hide itself. The jockeys say of certain horses, that "they look over the whole ground." The out-door life, and hunting, and labor, give equal vigor to the human eye. A farmer looks out at you as strong as the horse; his eye-beam is like the stroke of a staff. An eye can threaten like a loaded and levelled gun, or can insult like hissing or kicking; or, in its altered mood, by beams of kindness, it can make the heart dance with joy.

The eye obeys exactly the action of the mind. When a thought strikes us, the eyes fix, and remain gazing at a distance; in enumerating the names of persons or of countries, as France, Germany, Spain, Turkey, the eyes wink at each new name. There is no nicety of learning sought by the mind, which the eyes do not vie in acquiring. "An artist," said Michel Angelo, "must have his measuring tools, not in the hand, but in the eye"; and there is no end to the catalogue of its performances, whether in indolent vision (that of health and beauty) or in strained vision (that of art and labor).

Eyes are bold as lions, — roving, running, leaping, here and there, far and near. They speak all languages. They wait for no introduction; they are no Englishmen; ask no leave of age, or rank; they respect neither poverty nor riches, neither learning nor power, nor virtue, nor sex, but intrude, and come again, and go through and through you, in a moment of time. What inundation of life and thought is discharged from one soul into another, through them! The glance is natural magic. The mysterious communication established across a house between two entire strangers, moves all the springs of wonder. The commu-

nication by the glance is in the greatest part not subject to the control of the will. It is the bodily symbol of identity of nature. We look into the eyes to know if this other form is another self, and the eyes will not lie, but make a faithful confession what inhabitant is there. The revelations are sometimes terrific. The confession of a low, usurping devil is there made, and the observer shall seem to feel the stirring of owls, and bats, and horned hoofs, where he looked for innocence and simplicity. 'T is remarkable, too, that the spirit that appears at the windows of the house does at once invest himself in a new form of his own, to the mind of the beholder.

The eyes of men converse as much as their tongues, with the advantage, that the ocular dialect needs no dictionary, but is understood all the world over. When the eyes say one thing, and the tongue another, a practised man relies on the language of the first. If the man is off his centre, the eyes show it. You can read in the eyes of your companion, whether your argument hits him, though his tongue will not confess it. There is a look by which a man shows he is going to say a good thing, and a look when he has said it. Vain and

forgotten are all the fine offers and offices of hospitality, if there is no holiday in the eye. How many furtive inclinations avowed by the eye, though dissembled by the lips! One comes away from a company, in which, it may easily happen, he has said nothing, and no important remark has been addressed to him, and yet, if in sympathy with the society, he shall not have a sense of this fact, such a stream of life has been flowing into him, and out from him, through the eyes. There are eyes, to be sure, that give no more admission into the man than blueberries. Others are liquid and deep, — wells that a man might fall into; others are aggressive and devouring, seem to call out the police, take all too much notice, and require crowded Broadways, and the security of millions, to protect individuals against them. The military eye I meet, now darkly sparkling under clerical, now under rustic brows. 'T is the city of Lacedæmon; 't is a stack of bayonets. There are asking eyes, asserting eyes, prowling eyes; and eyes full of fate, — some of good and some of sinister omen. The alleged power to charm down insanity, or ferocity in beasts, is a power behind the eye. It must be a victory achieved in the will, before it can

be signified in the eye. 'T is very certain that each man carries in his eye the exact indication of his rank in the immense scale of men, and we are always learning to read it. A complete man should need no auxiliaries to his personal presence. Whoever looked on him would consent to his will, being certified that his aims were generous and universal. The reason why men do not obey us, is because they see the mud at the bottom of our eye.

If the organ of sight is such a vehicle of power, the other features have their own. A man finds room in the few square inches of the face for the traits of all his ancestors; for the expression of all his history, and his wants. The sculptor, and Winckelmann, and Lavater will tell you how significant a feature is the nose; how its forms express strength or weakness of will, and good or bad temper. The nose of Julius Cæsar, of Dante, and of Pitt suggest "the terrors of the beak." What refinement, and what limitations, the teeth betray! "Beware you don't laugh," said the wise mother, "for then you show all your faults."

Balzac left in manuscript a chapter, which he called "*Théorie de la démarche*," in which he says: "The look, the voice, the respiration,

and the attitude or walk are identical. But as it has not been given to man, the power to stand guard, at once, over these four different simultaneous expressions of his thought, watch that one which speaks out the truth, and you will know the whole man."

Palaces interest us mainly in the exhibition of manners, which, in the idle and expensive society dwelling in them, are raised to a high art. The maxim of courts is, that manner is power. A calm and resolute bearing, a polished speech, an embellishment of trifles, and the art of hiding all uncomfortable feeling, are essential to the courtier; and Saint Simon, and Cardinal de Retz, and Rœderer, and an encyclopædia of *Mémoires*, will instruct you, if you wish, in those potent secrets. Thus, it is a point of pride with kings, to remember faces and names. It is reported of one prince, that his head* had the air of leaning downwards, in order not to humble the crowd. There are people who come in ever like a child with a piece of good news. It was said of the late Lord Holland, that he always came down to breakfast with the air of a man who had just met with some signal good-fortune. In "*Notre Dame*," the grandee took his place on the dais,

with the look of one who is thinking of something else. But we must not peep and eavesdrop at palace-doors.

Fine manners need the support of fine manners in others. A scholar may be a well-bred man, or he may not. The enthusiast is introduced to polished scholars in society, and is chilled and silenced by finding himself not in their element. They all have somewhat which he has not, and, it seems, ought to have. But if he finds the scholar apart from his companions, it is then the enthusiast's turn, and the scholar has no defence, but must deal on his terms. Now they must fight the battle out on their private strengths. What is the talent of that character so common, — the successful man of the world, — in all marts, senates, and drawing-rooms? Manners: manners of power; sense to see his advantage, and manners up to it. See him approach his man. He knows that troops behave as they are handled at first; — that is his cheap secret; just what happens to every two persons who meet on any affair, — one instantly perceives that he has the key of the situation, that his will comprehends the other's will, as the cat does the mouse; and he has only to use courtesy, and furnish

good-natured reasons to his victim to cover up the chain, lest he be shamed into resistance.

The theatre in which this science of manners has a formal importance is not with us a court, but dress-circles, wherein, after the close of the day's business, men and women meet at leisure, for mutual entertainment, in ornamented drawing-rooms. Of course it has every variety of attraction and merit ; but, to earnest persons, to youths or maidens who have great objects at heart, we cannot extol it highly. A well-dressed, talkative company, where each is bent to amuse the other, — yet the high-born Turk who came hither fancied that every woman seemed to be suffering for a chair ; that all the talkers were brained and exhausted by the deoxygenated air : it spoiled the best persons : it put all on stilts. Yet here are the secret biographies written and read. The aspect of that man is repulsive ; I do not wish to deal with him. The other is irritable, shy, and on his guard. The youth looks humble and manly : I choose him. Look on this woman. There is not beauty, nor brilliant sayings, nor distinguished power to serve you ; but all see her gladly ; her whole air and impression are healthful. Here come the sentimentalists, and

the invalids. Here is Elise who caught cold in coming into the world, and has always increased it since. Here are creep-mouse manners ; and thievish manners. "Look at Northcote," said Fuseli ; "he looks like a rat that has seen a cat." In the shallow company, easily excited, easily tired, here is the columnar Bernard : the Alleghanies do not express more repose than his behavior. Here are the sweet following eyes of Cecile : it seemed always that she demanded the heart. Nothing can be more excellent in kind than the Corinthian grace of Gertrude's manners, and yet Blanche, who has no manners, has better manners than she ; for the movements of Blanche are the sallies of a spirit which is sufficient for the moment, and she can afford to express every thought by instant action.

Manners have been somewhat cynically defined to be a contrivance of wise men to keep fools at a distance. Fashion is shrewd to detect those who do not belong to her train, and seldom wastes her attentions. Society is very swift in its instincts, and, if you do not belong to it, resists and sneers at you, or quietly drops you. The first weapon enrages the party attacked ; the second is still more effective, but

is not to be resisted, as the date of the transaction is not easily found. People grow up and grow old under this infliction, and never suspect the truth, ascribing the solitude which acts on them very injuriously to any cause but the right one.

The basis of good manners is self-reliance. Necessity is the law of all who are not self-possessed. Those who are not self-possessed, obtrude, and pain us. Some men appear to feel that they belong to a Pariah caste. They fear to offend, they bend and apologize, and walk through life with a timid step. As we sometimes dream that we are in a well-dressed company without any coat, so Godfrey acts ever as if he suffered from some mortifying circumstance. The hero should find himself at home, wherever he is ; should impart comfort by his own security and good-nature to all beholders. The hero is suffered to be himself. A person of strong mind comes to perceive that for him an immunity is secured so long as he renders to society that service which is native and proper to him, — an immunity from all the observances, yea, and duties, which society so tyrannically imposes on the rank and file of its members. "Euripides," says Aspa-

sia, "has not the fine manners of Sophocles ; but," she adds good-humoredly, "the movers and masters of our souls have surely a right to throw out their limbs as carelessly as they please, on the world that belongs to them, and before the creatures they have animated." *

Manners require time, as nothing is more vulgar than haste. Friendship should be surrounded with ceremonies and respects, and not crushed into corners. Friendship requires more time than poor busy men can usually command. Here comes to me Roland, with a delicacy of sentiment leading and inwrapping him like a divine cloud or holy ghost. 'T is a great destitution to both that this should not be entertained with large leisures, but contrariwise should be balked by importunate affairs.

But through this lustrous varnish, the reality is ever shining. 'T is hard to keep the *what* from breaking through this pretty painting of *how*. The core will come to the surface. Strong will and keen perception overpower old manners and create new ; and the thought of the present moment has a greater value than all the past. In persons of character, we do not remark manners, because of their instantaneous-

* Landor : Pericles and Aspasia.

ness. We are surprised by the thing done, out of all power to watch the way of it. Yet nothing is more charming than to recognize the great style which runs through the actions of such. People masquerade before us in their fortunes, titles, offices, and connections, as academic or civil presidents, or senators, or professors, or great lawyers, and impose on the frivolous, and a good deal on each other, by these fames. At least, it is a point of prudent good manners to treat these reputations tenderly, as if they were merited. But the sad realist knows these fellows at a glance, and they know him; as when in Paris the chief of the police enters a ballroom, so many diamonded pretenders shrink and make themselves as inconspicuous as they can, or give him a supplicating look as they pass. "I had received," said a sibyl,—"I had received at birth the fatal gift of penetration":—and these Cassandras are always born.

Manners impress as they indicate real power. A man who is sure of his point carries a broad and contented expression, which everybody reads. And you cannot rightly train one to an air and manner, except by making him the kind of man of whom that manner is the natu-

ral expression. Nature forever put a premium on reality. What is done for effect is seen to be done for effect; what is done for love is felt to be done for love. A man inspires affection and honor, because he was not lying in wait for these. The things of a man for which we visit him were done in the dark and the cold. A little integrity is better than any career. So deep are the sources of this surface-action, that even the size of your companion seems to vary with his freedom of thought. Not only is he larger, when at ease, and his thoughts generous, but everything around him becomes variable with expression. No carpenter's rule, no rod and chain, will measure the dimensions of any house or house-lot: go into the house: if the proprietor is constrained and deferring, 't is of no importance how large his house, how beautiful his grounds, — you quickly come to the end of all: but if the man is self-possessed, happy, and at home, his house is deep-founded, indefinitely large and interesting, the roof and dome buoyant as the sky. Under the humblest roof, the commonest person in plain clothes sits there massive, cheerful, yet formidable like the Egyptian colossi.

Neither Aristotle, nor Leibnitz, nor Junius,

For Champollion has set down the grammar-rules of this dialect, older than Sanscrit; but they who cannot yet read English can read this. Men take each other's measure, when they meet for the first time, — and every time they meet. How do they get this rapid knowledge, even before they speak, of each other's power and dispositions? One would say, that the persuasion of their speech is not in what they say, — or, that men do not convince by their argument, — but by their personality, by who they are, and what they said and did heretofore. A man already strong is listened to, and everything he says is applauded. Another opposes him with sound argument, but the argument is scouted, until by and by it gets into the mind of some weighty person; then it begins to tell on the community.

Self-reliance is the basis of behavior, as it is the guaranty that the powers are not squandered in too much demonstration. In this country, where school education is universal, we have a superficial culture, and a profusion of reading and writing and expression. We parade our nobilities in poems and orations, instead of working them up into happiness. There is a whisper out of the ages to him who

can understand it, — “whatever is known to thyself alone has always very great value.” There is some reason to believe, that, when a man does not write his poetry, it escapes by other vents through him, instead of the one vent of writing; clings to his form and manners, whilst poets have often nothing poetical about them except their verses. Jacobi said, that “when a man has fully expressed his thought, he has somewhat less possession of it.” One would say, the rule is, What a man is irresistibly urged to say, helps him and us. In explaining his thought to others, he explains it to himself: but when he opens it for show, it corrupts him.

Society is the stage on which manners are shown; novels are their literature. Novels are the journal or record of manners; and the new importance of these books derives from the fact, that the novelist begins to penetrate the surface, and treat this part of life more worthily. The novels used to be all alike, and had a quite vulgar tone. The novels used to lead us on to a foolish interest in the fortunes of the boy and girl they described. The boy was to be raised from a humble to a high position. He was in want of a wife and a castle,

and the object of the story was to supply him with one or both. We watched sympathetically, step by step, his climbing, until, at last, the point is gained, the wedding day is fixed, and we follow the gala procession home to the castle, when the doors are slammed in our face, and the poor reader is left outside in the cold, not enriched by so much as an idea or a virtuous impulse.

But the victories of character are instant, and victories for all. Its greatness enlarges all. We are fortified by every heroic anecdote. The novels are as useful as Bibles, if they teach you the secret, that the best of life is conversation, and the greatest success is confidence, or perfect understanding between sincere people. 'T is a French definition of friendship, *rien que s'entendre*, good understanding. The highest compact we can make with our fellow is, "Let there be truth between us two forevermore." That is the charm in all good novels, as it is the charm in all good histories, that the heroes mutually understand, from the first, and deal loyally, and with a profound trust in each other. It is sublime to feel and say of another, I need never meet, or speak, or write to him: we need not reinforce ourselves, or

send tokens of remembrance: I rely on him as on myself: if he did thus or thus, I know it was right.

In all the superior people I have met, I notice directness, truth spoken more truly, as if everything of obstruction, of malformation, had been trained away. What have they to conceal? What have they to exhibit? Between simple and noble persons, there is always a quick intelligence; they recognize at sight, and meet on a better ground than the talents and skills they may chance to possess, namely, on sincerity and uprightness. For it is not what talents or genius a man has, but how he is to his talents, that constitutes friendship and character. The man that stands by himself, the universe stands by him also. It is related of the monk Basle, that, being excommunicated by the Pope, he was, at his death, sent in charge of an angel to find a fit place of suffering in hell; but, such was the eloquence and good-humor of the monk, that, wherever he went, he was received gladly, and civilly treated, even by the most uncivil angels; and when he came to discourse with them, instead of contradicting or forcing him, they took his part, and adopted his manners: and even good an-

gels came from far, to see him, and take up their abode with him. The angel that was sent to find a place of torment for him attempted to remove him to a worse pit, but with no better success; for such was the contented spirit of the monk, that he found something to praise in every place and company, though in hell, and made a kind of heaven of it. At last the escorting angel returned with his prisoner to them that sent him, saying, that no phlegethon could be found that would burn him; for that, in whatever condition, Basle remained incorrigibly Basle. The legend says, his sentence was remitted, and he was allowed to go into heaven, and was canonized as a saint.

There is a stroke of magnanimity in the correspondence of Bonaparte with his brother Joseph, when the latter was king of Spain, and complained that he missed in Napoleon's letters the affectionate tone which had marked their childish correspondence. "I am sorry," replies Napoleon, "you think you shall find your brother again only in the Elysian Fields. It is natural, that at forty, he should not feel towards you as he did at twelve. But his feelings towards you have greater truth and

strength. His friendship has the features of his mind."

How much we forgive to those who yield us the rare spectacle of heroic manners! We will pardon them the want of books, of arts, and even of the gentler virtues. How tenaciously we remember them! Here is a lesson which I brought along with me in boyhood from the Latin School, and which ranks with the best of Roman anecdotes. Marcus Scaurus was accused by Quintus Varius Hispanus, that he had excited the allies to take arms against the republic. But he, full of firmness and gravity, defended himself in this manner: "Quintus Varius Hispanus alleges that Marcus Scaurus, President of the Senate, excited the allies to arms: Marcus Scaurus, President of the Senate, denies it. There is no witness. Which do you believe, Romans?" "*Utri creditis, Quirites?*" When he had said these words, he was absolved by the assembly of the people.

I have seen manners that make a similar impression with personal beauty; that give the like exhilaration, and refine us like that; and, in memorable experiences, they are suddenly better than beauty, and make that superfluous

and ugly. But they must be marked by fine perception, the acquaintance with real beauty. They must always show self-control: you shall not be facile, apologetic, or leaky, but king over your word; and every gesture and action shall indicate power at rest. Then they must be inspired by the good heart. There is no beautifier of complexion, or form, or behavior, like the wish to scatter joy and not pain around us. 'T is good to give a stranger a meal or a night's lodging. 'T is better to be hospitable to his good meaning and thought, and give courage to a companion. We must be as courteous to a man as we are to a picture, which we are willing to give the advantage of a good light. Special precepts are not to be thought of: the talent of well-doing contains them all. Every hour will show a duty as paramount as that of my whim just now; and yet I will write it, — that there is one topic peremptorily forbidden to all well-bred, to all rational mortals, namely, their distempers. If you have not slept, or if you have slept, or if you have headache, or sciatica, or leprosy, or thunder-stroke, I beseech you, by all angels, to hold your peace, and not pollute the morning, to which all the housemates bring

serene and pleasant thoughts, by corruption and groans. Come out of the azure. Love the day. Do not leave the sky out of your landscape. The oldest and the most deserving person should come very modestly into any newly awaked company, respecting the divine communications, out of which all must be presumed to have newly come. An old man who added an elevating culture to a large experience of life said to me, "When you come into the room, I think I will study how to make humanity beautiful to you."

As respects the delicate question of culture, I do not think that any other than negative rules can be laid down. For positive rules, for suggestion, Nature alone inspires it. Who dare assume to guide a youth, a maid, to perfect manners? — the golden mean is so delicate, difficult, — say frankly, unattainable. What finest hands would not be clumsy to sketch the genial precepts of the young girl's demeanor? The chances seem infinite against success; and yet success is continually attained. There must not be secondariness, and 't is a thousand to one that her air and manner will at once betray that she is not primary, but that there is some other one or many of her class, to whom

she habitually postpones herself. But Nature lifts her easily, and without knowing it, over these impossibilities, and we are continually surprised with graces and felicities not only unteachable, but undescribable.







BEAUTY.

Was never form and never face
So sweet to SEYD as only grace
Which did not slumber like a stone
But hovered gleaming and was gone.
Beauty chased he everywhere,
In flame, in storm, in clouds of air.
He smote the lake to feed his eye
With the beryl beam of the broken wave,
He flung in pebbles well to hear
The moment's music which they gave.
Oft pealed for him a lofty tone
From nodding pole and belting zone.
He heard a voice none else could hear
From centred and from errant sphere.
The quaking earth did quake in rhyme,
Seas ebbed and flowed in epic chime.
In dens of passion, and pits of woe,
He saw strong Eros struggling through,
To sun the dark and solve the curse,
And beam to the bounds of the universe.

While thus to love he gave his days
In loyal worship, scorning praise,
How spread their lures for him, in vain,
Thieving Ambition and paltering Gain!
He thought it happier to be dead,
To die for Beauty, than live for bread.





BEAUTY.

THE spiral tendency of vegetation infects education also. Our books approach very slowly the things we most wish to know. What a parade we make of our science, and how far off, and at arm's length, it is from its objects! Our botany is all names, not powers: poets and romancers talk of herbs of grace and healing; but what does the botanist know of the virtues of his weeds? The geologist lays bare the strata, and can tell them all on his fingers; but does he know what effect passes into the man who builds his house in them? what effect on the race that inhabits a granite shelf? what on the inhabitants of marl and of alluvium?

We should go to the ornithologist with a new feeling, if he could teach us what the so-

cial birds say, when they sit in the autumn council, talking together in the trees. The want of sympathy makes his record a dull dictionary. His result is a dead bird. | The bird is not in its ounces and inches, but in its relations to nature; and the skin or skeleton you show me is no more a heron, than a heap of ashes or a bottle of gases into which his body has been reduced, is Dante or Washington. The naturalist is led *from* the road by the whole distance of his fancied advance. The boy had juster views when he gazed at the shells on the beach, or the flowers in the meadow, unable to call them by their names, than the man in the pride of his nomenclature. Astrology interested us, for it tied man to the system. Instead of an isolated beggar, the farthest star felt him, and he felt the star. However rash and however falsified by pretenders and traders in it, the hint was true and divine, the soul's avowal of its large relations, and, that climate, century, remote natures, as well as near, are part of its biography. Chemistry takes to pieces, but it does not construct. Alchemy which sought to transmute one element into another, to prolong life, to arm with power, — that was in the right direction. All

our science lacks a human side. The tenant is more than the house. Bugs and stamens and spores, on which we lavish so many years, are not finalities ; and man, when his powers unfold in order, will take Nature along with him, and emit light into all her recesses. The human heart concerns us more than the poring into microscopes, and is larger than can be measured by the pompous figures of the astronomer.

We are just so frivolous and sceptical. Men hold themselves cheap and vile ; and yet a man is a fagot of thunderbolts. All the elements pour through his system : he is the flood of the flood, and fire of the fire ; he feels the antipodes and the pole, as drops of his blood : they are the extension of his personality. His duties are measured by that instrument he is ; and a right and perfect man would be felt to the centre of the Copernican system. 'T is curious that we only believe as deep as we live. We do not think heroes can exert any more awful power than that surface-play which amuses us. A deep man believes in miracles, waits for them, believes in magic, believes that the orator will decompose his adversary ; believes that the evil eye can wither, that the

heart's blessing can heal ; that love can exalt talent ; can overcome all odds. From a great heart secret magnetisms flow incessantly to draw great events. But we prize very humble utilities, a prudent husband, a good son, a voter, a citizen, and deprecate any romance of character ; and perhaps reckon only his money value, — his intellect, his affection, as a sort of bill of exchange, easily convertible into fine chambers, pictures, music, and wine.

The motive of science was the extension of man, on all sides, into nature, till his hands should touch the stars, his eyes see through the earth, his ears understand the language of beast and bird, and the sense of the wind ; and through his sympathy, heaven and earth should talk with him. But that is not our science. These geologies, chemistries, astronomies, seem to make wise, but they leave us where they found us. The invention is of use to the inventor, of questionable help to any other. The formulas of science are like the papers in your pocket-book, of no value to any but the owner. Science in England, in America, is jealous of theory, hates the name of love and moral purpose. There's a revenge for this inhumanity. What manner of man

Does science make? The boy is not attracted. He says, I do not wish to be such a kind of man as my professor is. The collector has dried all the plants in his herbal, but he has lost weight and humor. He has got all snakes and lizards in his phials, but science has done for him also, and has put the man into a bottle. Our reliance on the physician is a kind of despair of ourselves. The clergy have bronchitis, which does not seem a certificate of spiritual health. Macready thought it came of the *falsetto* of their voicing. An Indian prince, Tisso, one day riding in the forest, saw a herd of elk sporting. "See how happy," he said, "these browsing elks are! Why should not priests, lodged and fed comfortably in the temples, also amuse themselves?" Returning home, he imparted this reflection to the king. The king, on the next day, conferred the sovereignty on him, saying, "Prince, administer this empire for seven days: at the termination of that period, I shall put thee to death." At the end of the seventh day the king inquired, "From what cause hast thou become so emaciated?" He answered, "From the horror of death." The monarch rejoined: "Live, my child, and be wise. Thou hast ceased to take recreation,

saying to thyself, In seven days I shall be put to death. These priests in the temple incessantly meditate on death; how can they enter into healthful diversions?" But the men of science or the doctors or the clergy are not victims of their pursuits, more than others. The miller, the lawyer, and the merchant dedicate themselves to their own details, and do not come out men of more force. Have they divination, grand aims, hospitality of soul, and the equality to any event, which we demand in man, or only the reactions of the mill, of the wares, of the chicane?

No object really interests us but man, and in man only his superiorities; and, though we are aware of a perfect law in nature, it has fascination for us only through its relation to him, or, as it is rooted in the mind. At the birth of Winckelmann, more than a hundred years ago, side by side with this arid, departmental, *post mortem* science, rose an enthusiasm in the study of Beauty; and perhaps some sparks from it may yet light a conflagration in the other. Knowledge of men, knowledge of manners, the power of form, and our sensibility to personal influence, never go out of fashion. These are facts of a science which we study

without book, whose teachers and subjects are always near us.

So inveterate is our habit of criticism, that much of our knowledge in this direction belongs to the chapter of pathology. The crowd in the street oftener furnishes degradations than angels or redeemers; but they all prove the transparency. Every spirit makes its house; and we can give a shrewd guess from the house to the inhabitant. But not less does nature furnish us with every sign of grace and goodness. The delicious faces of children, the beauty of school-girls, "the sweet seriousness of sixteen," the lofty air of well-born, well-bred boys, the passionate histories in the looks and manners of youth and early manhood, and the varied power in all that well-known company that escort us through life, — we know how these forms thrill, paralyze, provoke, inspire, and enlarge us.

Beauty is the form under which the intellect prefers to study the world. All privilege is that of beauty; for there are many beauties; as, of general nature, of the human face and form, of manners, of brain, or method, moral beauty, or beauty of the soul.

The ancients believed that a genius or demon

took possession at birth of each mortal, to guide him; that these genii were sometimes seen as a flame of fire partly immersed in the bodies which they governed; — on an evil man, resting on his head; in a good man, mixed with his substance. They thought the same genius, at the death of its ward, entered a new-born child, and they pretended to guess the pilot, by the sailing of the ship. We recognize obscurely the same fact, though we give it our own names. We say, that every man is entitled to be valued by his best moment. We measure our friends so. We know, they have intervals of folly, whereof we take no heed, but wait the reappearings of the genius, which are sure and beautiful. On the other side, everybody knows people who appear beridden, and who, with all degrees of ability, never impress us with the air of free agency. They know it too, and peep with their eyes to see if you detect their sad plight. We fancy, could we pronounce the solving word, and disenchant them, the cloud would roll up, the little rider would be discovered and unseated, and they would regain their freedom. The remedy seems never to be far off, since the first step into thought lifts this mountain of

necessity. Thought is the pent air-ball which can rive the planet, and the beauty which certain objects have for him is the friendly fire which expands the thought, and acquaints the prisoner that liberty and power await him.

The question of Beauty takes us out of surfaces, to thinking of the foundations of things. Goethe said, "The beautiful is a manifestation of secret laws of nature, which, but for this appearance, had been forever concealed from us." And the working of this deep instinct makes all the excitement — much of it superficial and absurd enough — about works of art, which leads armies of vain travellers every year to Italy, Greece, and Egypt. Every man values every acquisition he makes in the science of beauty above his possessions. The most useful man in the most useful world, so long as only commodity was served, would remain unsatisfied. But, as fast as he sees beauty, life acquires a very high value.

I am warned by the ill fate of many philosophers not to attempt a definition of Beauty. I will rather enumerate a few of its qualities. We ascribe beauty to that which is simple; which has no superfluous parts; which exactly answers its end; which stands related to all

things; which is the mean of many extremes. It is the most enduring quality, and the most ascending quality. We say, love is blind, and the figure of Cupid is drawn with a bandage round his eyes. Blind: — yes, because he does not see what he does not like; but the sharpest-sighted hunter in the universe is Love, for finding what he seeks, and only that; and the mythologists tell us, that Vulcan was painted lame, and Cupid blind, to call attention to the fact, that one was all limbs, and the other all eyes. In the true mythology, Love is an immortal child, and Beauty leads him as a guide: nor can we express a deeper sense than when we say, Beauty is the pilot of the young soul.

Beyond their sensuous delight, the forms and colors of nature have a new charm for us in our perception, that not one ornament was added for ornament, but is a sign of some better health or more excellent action. Elegance of form in bird or beast, or in the human figure, marks some excellence of structure; or beauty is only an invitation from what belongs to us. 'T is a law of botany, that in plants, the same virtues follow the same forms. It is a rule of largest application, true in a plant, true in a

loaf of bread, that in the construction of any fabric or organism, any real increase of fitness to its end is an increase of beauty.

The lesson taught by the study of Greek and of Gothic art, of antique and of Pre-Raphaelite painting, was worth all the research, — namely, that all beauty must be organic; that outside embellishment is deformity. It is the soundness of the bones that ultimates itself in a peach-bloom complexion: health of constitution that makes the sparkle and the power of the eye. 'T is the adjustment of the size and of the joining of the sockets of the skeleton, that gives grace of outline and the finer grace of movement. The cat and the deer cannot move or sit inelegantly. The dancing-master can never teach a badly built man to walk well. The tint of the flower proceeds from its root, and the lustres of the sea-shell begin with its existence. Hence our taste in building rejects paint, and all shifts, and shows the original grain of the wood: refuses pilasters and columns that support nothing, and allows the real supporters of the house honestly to show themselves. Every necessary or organic action pleases the beholder. A man leading a horse to water, a farmer sowing seed, the labors of

haymakers in the field, the carpenter building a ship, the smith at his forge, or whatever useful labor, is becoming to the wise eye. But if it is done to be seen, it is mean. How beautiful are ships on the sea! but ships in the theatre, — or ships kept for picturesque effect on Virginia Water, by George IV., and men hired to stand in fitting costumes at a penny an hour! — What a difference in effect between a battalion of troops marching to action, and one of our independent companies on a holiday! In the midst of a military show, and a festal procession gay with banners, I saw a boy seize an old tin pan that lay rusting under a wall, and poising it on the top of a stick, he set it turning, and made it describe the most elegant imaginable curves, and drew away attention from the decorated procession by this startling beauty.

Another text from the mythologists. The Greeks fabled that Venus was born of the foam of the sea. Nothing interests us which is stark or bounded, but only what streams with life, what is in act or endeavor to reach somewhat beyond. The pleasure a palace or a temple gives the eye is, that an order and method has been communicated to stones, so

that they speak and geometrize, become tender or sublime with expression. Beauty is the moment of transition, as if the form were just ready to flow into other forms. Any fixedness, heaping, or concentration on one feature — a long nose, a sharp chin, a hump-back — is the reverse of the flowing, and therefore deformed. Beautiful as is the symmetry of any form, if the form can move, we seek a more excellent symmetry. The interruption of equilibrium stimulates the eye to desire the restoration of symmetry, and to watch the steps through which it is attained. This is the charm of running water, sea-waves, the flight of birds, and the locomotion of animals. This is the theory of dancing, to recover continually in changes the lost equilibrium, not by abrupt and angular, but by gradual and curving movements. I have been told by persons of experience in matters of taste, that the fashions follow a law of gradation, and are never arbitrary. The new mode is always only a step onward in the same direction as the last mode; and a cultivated eye is prepared for and predicts the new fashion. This fact suggests the reason of all mistakes and offence in our own modes. It is necessary in music, when you

strike a discord, to let down the ear by an intermediate note or two to the accord again; and many a good experiment, born of good sense, and destined to succeed, fails only because it is offensively sudden. I suppose, the Parisian milliner who dresses the world from her imperious boudoir will know how to reconcile the Bloomer costume to the eye of mankind, and make it triumphant over Punch himself, by interposing the just gradations. I need not say how wide the same law ranges, and how much it can be hoped to effect. All that is a little harshly claimed by progressive parties may easily come to be conceded without question, if this rule be observed. Thus the circumstances may be easily imagined in which woman may speak, vote, argue causes, legislate, and drive a coach, and all the most naturally in the world, if only it come by degrees. To this streaming or flowing belongs the beauty that all circular movement has; as, the circulation of waters, the circulation of the blood, the periodical motion of planets, the annual wave of vegetation, the action and reaction of nature: and, if we follow it out, this demand in our thought for an ever-onward action is the argument for the immortality.

One more text from the mythologists is to the same purpose, — *Beauty rides on a lion*. Beauty rests on necessities. The line of beauty is the result of perfect economy. The cell of the bee is built at that angle which gives the most strength with the least wax ; the bone or the quill of the bird gives the most alar strength, with the least weight. “It is the purgation of superfluities,” said Michel Angelo. There is not a particle to spare in natural structures. There is a compelling reason in the uses of the plant, for every novelty of color or form ; and our art saves material, by more skilful arrangement, and reaches beauty by taking every superfluous ounce that can be spared from a wall, and keeping all its strength in the poetry of columns. In rhetoric, this art of omission is a chief secret of power, and, in general, it is proof of high culture, to say the greatest matters in the simplest way.

Veracity first of all, and forever. *Rien de beau que le vrai*. In all design, art lies in making your object prominent, but there is a prior art in choosing objects that are prominent. The fine arts have nothing casual, but spring from the instincts of the nations that created them.

Beauty is the quality which makes to endure. In a house that I know, I have noticed a block of spermaceti lying about closets and mantel-pieces, for twenty years together, simply because the tallow-man gave it the form of a rabbit; and, I suppose, it may continue to be lugged about unchanged for a century. Let an artist scrawl a few lines or figures on the back of a letter, and that scrap of paper is rescued from danger, is put in portfolio, is framed and glazed, and, in proportion to the beauty of the lines drawn, will be kept for centuries. Burns writes a copy of verses, and sends them to a newspaper, and the human race take charge of them that they shall not perish.

As the flute is heard farther than the cart, see how surely a beautiful form strikes the fancy of men, and is copied and reproduced without end. How many copies are there of the Belvedere Apollo, the Venus, the Psyche, the Warwick Vase, the Parthenon, and the Temple of Vesta? These are objects of tenderness to all. In our cities, an ugly building is soon removed, and is never repeated, but any beautiful building is copied and improved upon, so that all masons and carpenters work

to repeat and preserve the agreeable forms, whilst the ugly ones die out.

The felicities of design in art, or in works of nature, are shadows or forerunners of that beauty which reaches its perfection in the human form. All men are its lovers. Wherever it goes, it creates joy and hilarity, and everything is permitted to it. It reaches its height in woman. "To Eve," say the Mahometans, "God gave two thirds of all beauty." A beautiful woman is a practical poet, taming her savage mate, planting tenderness, hope, and eloquence in all whom she approaches. Some favors of condition must go with it, since a certain serenity is essential, but we love its reproofs and superiorities. Nature wishes that woman should attract man, yet she often cunningly moulds into her face a little sarcasm, which seems to say, "Yes, I am willing to attract, but to attract a little better kind of a man than any I yet behold." French *mémoires* of the fifteenth century celebrate the name of Pauline de Viguier, a virtuous and accomplished maiden, who so fired the enthusiasm of her contemporaries, by her enchanting form, that the citizens of her native city of Toulouse obtained the aid of the civil authorities to com-

pel her to appear publicly on the balcony at least twice a week, and, as often as she showed herself, the crowd was dangerous to life. Not less, in England, in the last century, was the fame of the Gunnings, of whom, Elizabeth married the Duke of Hamilton; and Maria, the Earl of Coventry. Walpole says, "The concourse was so great, when the Duchess of Hamilton was presented at court, on Friday, that even the noble crowd in the drawing-room clambered on chairs and tables to look at her. There are mobs at their doors to see them get into their chairs, and people go early to get places at the theatres, when it is known they will be there." "Such crowds," he adds, elsewhere, "flock to see the Duchess of Hamilton, that seven hundred people sat up all night, in and about an inn, in Yorkshire, to see her get into her post-chaise next morning."

But why need we console ourselves with the fames of H len of Argos, or Corinna, or Pauline of Toulouse, or the Duchess of Hamilton? We all know this magic very well, or can divine it. It does not hurt weak eyes to look into beautiful eyes never so long. Women stand related to beautiful nature around us, and the enamored youth mixes their form with

moon and stars, with woods and waters, and the pomp of summer. They heal us of awkwardness by their words and looks. We observe their intellectual influence on the most serious student. They refine and clear his mind; teach him to put a pleasing method into what is dry and difficult. We talk to them, and wish to be listened to; we fear to fatigue them, and acquire a facility of expression which passes from conversation into habit of style.

That Beauty is the normal state is shown by the perpetual effort of nature to attain it. Mirabeau had an ugly face on a handsome ground; and we see faces every day which have a good type, but have been marred in the casting: a proof that we are all entitled to beauty, should have been beautiful, if our ancestors had kept the laws, — as every lily and every rose is well. But our bodies do not fit us, but caricature and satirize us. Thus short legs, which constrain us to short, mincing steps, are a kind of personal insult and contumely to the owner; and long stilts, again, put him at perpetual disadvantage, and force him to stoop to the general level of mankind. Martial ridicules a gentleman of his day whose

countenance resembled the face of a swimmer seen under water. Saadi describes a school-master "so ugly and crabbed, that a sight of him would derange the ecstasies of the orthodox." Faces are rarely true to any ideal type, but are a record in sculpture of a thousand anecdotes of whim and folly. Portrait-painters say that most faces and forms are irregular and unsymmetrical; have one eye blue, and one gray; the nose not straight; and one shoulder higher than another; the hair unequally distributed, etc. The man is physically as well as metaphysically a thing of shreds and patches, borrowed unequally from good and bad ancestors, and a misfit from the start.

A beautiful person, among the Greeks, was thought to betray by this sign some secret favor of the immortal gods; and we can pardon pride, when a woman possesses such a figure, that wherever she stands, or moves, or leaves a shadow on the wall, or sits for a portrait to the artist, she confers a favor on the world. And yet—it is not beauty that inspires the deepest passion. Beauty without grace is the hook without the bait. Beauty without expression tires. Abbé Ménage said of the President

Le Bailleul, "that he was fit for nothing but to sit for his portrait." A Greek epigram intimates that the force of love is not shown by the courting of beauty, but when the like desire is inflamed for one who is ill-favored. And petulant old gentlemen, who have chanced to suffer some intolerable weariness from pretty people, or who have seen cut flowers to some profusion, or who see, after a world of pains have been successfully taken for the costume, how the least mistake in sentiment takes all the beauty out of your clothes, affirm that the secret of ugliness consists, not in irregularity, but in being uninteresting.

We love any forms, however ugly, from which great qualities shine. If command, eloquence, art, or invention exist in the most deformed person, all the accidents that usually displease, please, and raise esteem and wonder higher. The great orator was an emaciated, insignificant person, but he was all brain. Cardinal De Retz says of De Bouillon, "With the physiognomy of an ox, he had the perspicacity of an eagle." It was said of Hooke, the friend of Newton, "He is the most, and promises the least, of any man in England." "Since I am so ugly," said Du Guesclin, "it

behooves that I be bold." Sir Philip Sidney, the darling of mankind, Ben Jonson tells us, "was no pleasant man in countenance, his face being spoiled with pimples, and of high blood, and long." Those who have ruled human destinies, like planets, for thousands of years, were not handsome men. If a man can raise a small city to be a great kingdom, can make bread cheap, can irrigate deserts, can join oceans by canals, can subdue steam, can organize victory, can lead the opinions of mankind, can enlarge knowledge, 't is no matter whether his nose is parallel to his spine, as it ought to be, or whether he has a nose at all; whether his legs are straight, or whether his legs are amputated; his deformities will come to be reckoned ornamental, and advantageous on the whole. This is the triumph of expression, degrading beauty, charming us with a power so fine and friendly and intoxicating, that it makes admired persons insipid, and the thought of passing our lives with them insupportable. There are faces so fluid with expression, so flushed and rippled by the play of thought, that we can hardly find what the mere features really are. When the delicious beauty of lineaments loses its power, it is because a

more delicious beauty has appeared ; that an interior and durable form has been disclosed. Still, Beauty rides on her lion, as before. Still, "it was for beauty that the world was made." The lives of the Italian artists, who established a despotism of genius amidst the dukes and kings and mobs of their stormy epoch, prove how loyal men in all times are to a finer brain, a finer method, than their own. If a man can cut such a head on his stone gate-post as shall draw and keep a crowd about it all day, by its beauty, good-nature, and inscrutable meaning ; if a man can build a plain cottage with such symmetry as to make all the fine palaces look cheap and vulgar ; can take such advantage of Nature, that all her powers serve him ; making use of geometry, instead of expense ; tapping a mountain for his water-jet ; causing the sun and moon to seem only the decorations of his estate ; — this is still the legitimate dominion of beauty.

The radiance of the human form, though sometimes astonishing, is only a burst of beauty for a few years or a few months, at the perfection of youth, and in most, rapidly declines. But we remain lovers of it, only transferring our interest to interior excellence. And it is

not only admirable in singular and salient talents, but also in the world of manners.

But the sovereign attribute remains to be noted. Things are pretty, graceful, rich, elegant, handsome, but, until they speak to the imagination, not yet beautiful. This is the reason why beauty is still escaping out of all analysis. It is not yet possessed, it cannot be handled. Proclus says, "It swims on the light of forms." It is properly not in the form, but in the mind. It instantly deserts possession, and flies to an object in the horizon. If I could put my hand on the north star, would it be as beautiful? The sea is lovely, but when we bathe in it, the beauty forsakes all the near water. For the imagination and senses cannot be gratified at the same time. Wordsworth rightly speaks of "a light that never was on sea or land," meaning, that it was supplied by the observer; and the Welsh bard warns his countrywomen that

"Half of their charms with Cadwallon shall die."

The new virtue which constitutes a thing beautiful is a certain cosmical quality, or a power to suggest relation to the whole world, and so lift the object out of a pitiful individuality.

Every natural feature — sea, sky, rainbow, flowers, musical tone — has in it somewhat which is not private, but universal, speaks of that central benefit which is the soul of nature, and thereby is beautiful. And, in chosen men and women, I find somewhat in form, speech, and manners which is not of their person and family, but of a humane, catholic, and spiritual character, and we love them as the sky. They have a largeness of suggestion, and their face and manners carry a certain grandeur like time and justice.

The feat of the imagination is in showing the convertibility of everything into every other thing. Facts which had never before left their stark common-sense, suddenly figure as Eleusinian mysteries. My boots and chair and candlestick are fairies in disguise, meteors, and constellations. All the facts in nature are nouns of the intellect, and make the grammar of the eternal language. Every word has a double, treble, or centuple use and meaning. What! has my stove and pepper-pot a false bottom! I cry you mercy, good shoe-box! I did not know you were a jewel-case. Chaff and dust begin to sparkle, and are clothed about with immortality. And there is a joy in

perceiving the representative or symbolic character of a fact, which no bare fact or event can ever give. There are no days in life so memorable as those which vibrated to some stroke of the imagination.

The poets are quite right in decking their mistresses with the spoils of the landscape, flower-gardens, gems, rainbows, flushes of morning, and stars of night, since all beauty points at identity, and whatsoever thing does not express to me the sea and sky, day and night, is somewhat forbidden and wrong. Into every beautiful object there enters somewhat immeasurable and divine, and just as much into form bounded by outlines, like mountains on the horizon, as into tones of music, or depths of space. Polarized light showed the secret architecture of bodies; and when the *second-sight* of the mind is opened, now one color or form or gesture, and now another, has a pungency, as if a more interior ray had been emitted, disclosing its deep holdings in the frame of things.

The laws of this translation we do not know, or why one feature or gesture enchants, why one word or syllable intoxicates; but the fact is familiar that the fine touch of the eye, or a

grace of manners, or a phrase of poetry, plants wings at our shoulders; as if the Divinity, in his approaches, lifts away mountains of obstruction, and deigns to draw a truer line, which the mind knows and owns. This is that haughty force of beauty, *vis superba formæ*, which the poets praise, — under calm and precise outline, the immeasurable and divine: Beauty hiding all wisdom and power in its calm sky.

All high beauty has a moral element in it, and I find the antique sculpture as ethical as Marcus Antoninus; and the beauty ever in proportion to the depth of thought. Gross and obscure natures, however decorated, seem impure shambles; but character gives splendor to youth, and awe to wrinkled skin and gray hairs. An adorer of truth we cannot choose but obey, and the woman who has shared with us the moral sentiment, — her locks must appear to us sublime. Thus there is a climbing scale of culture, from the first agreeable sensation which a sparkling gem or a scarlet stain affords the eye, up through fair outlines and details of the landscape, features of the human face and form, signs and tokens of thought and character in manners, up to the ineffable

mysteries of the intellect. Wherever we begin, thither our steps tend: an ascent from the joy of a horse in his trappings, up to the perception of Newton, that the globe on which we ride is only a larger apple falling from a larger tree; up to the perception of Plato, that globe and universe are rude and early expressions of an all-dissolving Unity, — the first stair on the scale to the temple of the Mind.





BOOKS, ART, ELOQUENCE.







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BOOKS.

IT is easy to accuse books, and bad ones are easily found; and the best are but records, and not the things recorded; and certainly there is dilettanteism enough, and books that are merely neutral and do nothing for us. In Plato's "Gorgias," Socrates says: "The shipmaster walks in a modest garb near the sea, after bringing his passengers from Ægina or from Pontus, not thinking he has done anything extraordinary, and certainly knowing that his passengers are the same, and in no respect better than when he took them on board." So is it with books, for the most part: they work no redemption in us. The bookseller might certainly know that his customers are in no respect better for the purchase and consumption of his wares.

The volume is dear at a dollar, and, after reading to weariness the lettered backs, we leave the shop with a sigh, and learn, as I did, without surprise, of a surly bank director, that in bank parlors they estimate all stocks of this kind as rubbish.

But it is not less true that there are books which are of that importance in a man's private experience, as to verify for him the fables of Cornelius Agrippa, of Michael Scott, or of the old Orpheus of Thrace, — books which take rank in our life with parents and lovers and passionate experiences, so medicinal, so stringent, so revolutionary, so authoritative, — books which are the work and the proof of faculties so comprehensive, so nearly equal to the world which they paint, that, though one shuts them with meaner ones, he feels his exclusion from them to accuse his way of living.

Consider what you have in the smallest chosen library. A company of the wisest and wittiest men that could be picked out of all civil countries, in a thousand years, have set in best order the results of their learning and wisdom. The men themselves were hid and inaccessible, solitary, impatient of interruption, fenced by etiquette; but the thought

which they did not uncover to their bosom friend is here written out in transparent words to us, the strangers of another age.

We owe to books those general benefits which come from high intellectual action. Thus, I think, we often owe to them the perception of immortality. They impart sympathetic activity to the moral power. Go with mean people, and you think life is mean. Then read Plutarch, and the world is a proud place, peopled with men of positive quality, with heroes and demigods standing around us, who will not let us sleep. Then, they address the imagination : only poetry inspires poetry. They become the organic culture of the time. College education is the reading of certain books which the common-sense of all scholars agrees will represent the science already accumulated. If you know that, — for instance in geometry, if you have read Euclid and Laplace, — your opinion has some value ; if you do not know these, you are not entitled to give any opinion on the subject. Whenever any sceptic or bigot claims to be heard on the questions of intellect and morals, we ask if he is familiar with the books of Plato, where all his pert objections have once for all been dis-

posed of. If not, he has no right to our time. Let him go and find himself answered there.

Meantime the colleges, whilst they provide us with libraries, furnish no professor of books; and, I think, no chair is so much wanted. In a library we are surrounded by many hundreds of dear friends, but they are imprisoned by an enchanter in these paper and leathern boxes; and though they know us, and have been waiting two, ten, or twenty centuries for us, — some of them, — and are eager to give us a sign, and unbosom themselves, it is the law of their limbo that they must not speak until spoken to; and as the enchanter has dressed them, like battalions of infantry, in coat and jacket of one cut, by the thousand and ten thousand, your chance of hitting on the right one is to be computed by the arithmetical rule of Permutation and Combination, — not a choice out of three caskets, but out of half a million caskets all alike. But it happens in our experience, that in this lottery there are at least fifty or a hundred blanks to a prize. It seems, then, as if some charitable soul, after losing a great deal of time among the false books, and alighting upon a few true ones which made him happy

and wise, would do a right act in naming those which have been bridges or ships to carry him safely over dark morasses and barren oceans, into the heart of sacred cities, into palaces and temples. This would be best done by those great masters of books who from time to time appear, — the Fabricii, the Seldens, Magliabecchis, Scaligers, Mirandolas, Bayles, Johnsons, whose eyes sweep the whole horizon of learning. But private readers, reading purely for love of the book, would serve us by leaving each the shortest note of what he found.

There are books; and it is practicable to read them, because they are so few. We look over with a sigh the monumental libraries of Paris, of the Vatican, and the British Museum. In 1858, the number of printed books in the Imperial Library at Paris was estimated at eight hundred thousand volumes, with an annual increase of twelve thousand volumes; so that the number of printed books extant to-day may easily exceed a million. It is easy to count the number of pages which a diligent man can read in a day, and the number of years which human life in favorable circumstances allows to reading; and to demonstrate that, though he should read from dawn till

dark, for sixty years, he must die in the first alcoves. But nothing can be more deceptive than this arithmetic, where none but a natural method is really pertinent. I visit occasionally the Cambridge Library, and I can seldom go there without renewing the conviction that the best of it all is already within the four walls of my study at home. The inspection of the catalogue brings me continually back to the few standard writers who are on every private shelf; and to these it can afford only the most slight and casual additions. The crowds and centuries of books are only commentary and elucidation, echoes and weakeners of these few great voices of Time.

The best rule of reading will be a method from nature, and not a mechanical one of hours and pages. It holds each student to a pursuit of his native aim, instead of a desultory miscellany. Let him read what is proper to him, and not waste his memory on a crowd of mediocrities. As whole nations have derived their culture from a single book, — as the Bible has been the literature as well as the religion of large portions of Europe, — as Hafiz was the eminent genius of the Persians, Confucius of the Chinese, Cervantes of

the Spaniards ; so, perhaps, the human mind would be a gainer, if all the secondary writers were lost, — say, in England, all but Shakespeare, Milton, and Bacon, — through the profounder study so drawn to those wonderful minds. With this pilot of his own genius, let the student read one, or let him read many, he will read advantageously. Dr. Johnson said : “ Whilst you stand deliberating which book your son shall read first, another boy has read both : read anything five hours a day, and you will soon be learned.”

Nature is much our friend in this matter. Nature is always clarifying her water and her wine. No filtration can be so perfect. She does the same thing by books as by her gases and plants. There is always a selection in writers, and then a selection from the selection. In the first place, all books that get fairly into the vital air of the world were written by the successful class, by the affirming and advancing class, who utter what tens of thousands feel though they cannot say. There has already been a scrutiny and choice from many hundreds of young pens, before the pamphlet or political chapter which you read in a fugitive journal comes to your eye. All

these are young adventurers, who produce their performance to the wise ear of Time, who sits and weighs, and, ten years hence, out of a million of pages reprints one. Again it is judged, it is winnowed by all the winds of opinion, and what terrific selection has not passed on it before it can be reprinted after twenty years, — and reprinted after a century ! — it is as if Minos and Rhadamanthus had indorsed the writing. 'Tis therefore an economy of time to read old and famed books. Nothing can be preserved which is not good ; and I know beforehand that Pindar, Martial, Terence, Galen, Kepler, Galileo, Bacon, Erasmus, More, will be superior to the average intellect. In contemporaries, it is not so easy to distinguish betwixt notoriety and fame.

Be sure, then, to read no mean books. Shun the spawn of the press on the gossip of the hour. Do not read what you shall learn, without asking, in the street and the train. Dr. Johnson said, “ he always went into stately shops ” ; and good travellers stop at the best hotels ; for, though they cost more, they do not cost much more, and there is the good company and the best information. In like manner, the scholar knows that the famed

books contain, first and last, the best thoughts and facts. Now and then, by rarest luck, in some foolish Grub Street is the gem we want. But in the best circles is the best information. If you should transfer the amount of your reading day by day from the newspaper to the standard authors — But who dare speak of such a thing?

The three practical rules, then, which I have to offer, are, — 1. Never read any book that is not a year old. 2. Never read any but famed books. 3. Never read any but what you like; or, in Shakespeare's phrase,

“No profit goes where is no pleasure ta'en :

In brief, sir, study what you most affect.”

Montaigne says, “Books are a languid pleasure”; but I find certain books vital and spermatic, not leaving the reader what he was: he shuts the book a richer man. I would never willingly read any others than such. And I will venture, at the risk of inditing a list of old primers and grammars, to count the few books which a superficial reader must thankfully use.

Of the old Greek books, I think there are five which we cannot spare: 1. Homer, who,

in spite of Pope and all the learned uproar of centuries, has really the true fire, and is good for simple minds, is the true and adequate germ of Greece, and occupies that place as history which nothing can supply. It holds through all literature, that our best history is still poetry. It is so in Hebrew, in Sanskrit, and in Greek. English history is best known through Shakespeare; how much through Merlin, Robin Hood, and the Scottish ballads! — the German, through the Nibelungenlied; the Spanish, through the Cid. Of Homer, George Chapman's is the heroic translation, though the most literal prose version is the best of all. 2. Herodotus, whose history contains inestimable anecdotes, which brought it with the learned into a sort of disesteem; but in these days, when it is found that what is most memorable of history is a few anecdotes, and that we need not be alarmed though we should find it not dull, it is regaining credit. 3. Æschylus, the grandest of the three tragedians, who has given us under a thin veil the first plantation of Europe. The "Prometheus" is a poem of the like dignity and scope as the Book of Job, or the Norse Edda. 4. Of Plato I hesitate to speak, lest there should be

end. You find in him that which you have already found in Homer, now ripened to thought,—the poet converted to a philosopher, with loftier strains of musical wisdom than Homer reached; as if Homer were the youth, and Plato the finished man; yet with no less security of bold and perfect song, when he cares to use it, and with some harp-strings fetched from a higher heaven. He contains the future, as he came out of the past. In Plato, you explore modern Europe in its causes and seed,—all that in thought, which the history of Europe embodies or has yet to embody. The well-informed man finds himself anticipated. Plato is up with him too. Nothing has escaped him. Every new crop in the fertile harvest of reform, every fresh suggestion of modern humanity, is there. If the student wish to see both sides, and justice done to the man of the world, pitiless exposure of pedants, and the supremacy of truth and the religious sentiment, he shall be contented also. Why should not young men be educated on this book? It would suffice for the tuition of the race,—to test their understanding, and to express their reason. Here is that which is so attractive

to all men, — the literature of aristocracy shall I call it? — the picture of the best persons, sentiments, and manners, by the first master, in the best times, — portraits of Pericles, Alcibiades, Crito, Prodicus, Protagoras, Anaxagoras, and Socrates, with the lovely background of the Athenian and suburban landscape. Or who can overestimate the images with which Plato has enriched the minds of men, and which pass like bullion in the currency of all nations? Read the "Phædo," the "Protagoras," the "Phædrus," the "Timæus," the "Republic," and the "Apology of Socrates." 5. Plutarch cannot be spared from the smallest library: first, because he is so readable, which is much; then, that he is medicinal and invigorating. The lives of Cimon, Lycurgus, Alexander, Demosthenes, Phocion, Marcellus, and the rest, are what history has of best. But this book has taken care of itself, and the opinion of the world is expressed in the innumerable cheap editions, which make it as accessible as a newspaper. But Plutarch's "Morals" is less known, and seldom reprinted. Yet such a reader as I am writing to can as ill spare it as the "Lives." He will read in it the essays

“On the Dæmon of Socrates,” “On Isis and Osiris,” “On Progress in Virtue,” “On Garrulity,” “On Love,” and thank anew the art of printing, and the cheerful domain of ancient thinking. Plutarch charms by the facility of his associations; so that it signifies little where you open his book, you find yourself at the Olympian tables. His memory is like the Isthmian Games, where all that was excellent in Greece was assembled, and you are stimulated and recruited by lyric verses, by philosophic sentiments, by the forms and behavior of heroes, by the worship of the gods, and by the passing of fillets, parsley and laurel-wreaths, chariots, armor, sacred cups, and utensils of sacrifice. An inestimable trilogy of ancient social pictures are the three “Banquets” respectively of Plato, Xenophon, and Plutarch. Plutarch’s has the least approach to historical accuracy; but the meeting of the Seven Wise Masters is a charming portraiture of ancient manners and discourse, and is as clear as the voice of a fife, and entertaining as a French novel. Xenophon’s delineation of Athenian manners is an accessory to Plato, and supplies traits of Socrates; whilst Plato’s has merits of every kind, — being a repertory

of the wisdom of the ancients on the subject of love, — a picture of a feast of wits, not less descriptive than Aristophanes, — and, lastly, containing that ironical eulogy of Socrates which is the source from which all the portraits of that philosopher current in Europe have been drawn.

Of course a certain outline should be obtained of Greek history, in which the important moments and persons can be rightly set down; but the shortest is the best, and if one lacks stomach for Mr. Grote's voluminous annals, the old slight and popular summary of Goldsmith or of Gillies will serve. The valuable part is the age of Pericles and the next generation. And here we must read the "Clouds" of Aristophanes, and what more of that master we gain appetite for, to learn our way in the streets of Athens, and to know the tyranny of Aristophanes, requiring more genius and sometimes not less cruelty than belonged to the official commanders. Aristophanes is now very accessible, with much valuable commentary, through the labors of Mitchell and Cartwright. An excellent popular book is J. A. St. John's "Ancient Greece"; the "Life and Letters" of Niebuhr, even more

than his Lectures, furnish leading views ; and Winckelmann, a Greek born out of due time, has become essential to an intimate knowledge of the Attic genius. The secret of the recent histories in German and in English is the discovery, owed first to Wolff, and later to Boeckh, that the sincere Greek history of that period must be drawn from Demosthenes, especially from the business orations, and from the comic poets.

If we come down a little by natural steps from the master to the disciples, we have, six or seven centuries later, the Platonists, — who also cannot be skipped, — Plotinus, Porphyry, Proclus, Synesius, Jamblichus. Of Jamblichus the Emperor Julian said, “that he was posterior to Plato in time, not in genius.” Of Plotinus, we have eulogies by Porphyry and Longinus, and the favor of the Emperor Gallienus, — indicating the respect he inspired among his contemporaries. If any one who had read with interest the “Isis and Osiris” of Plutarch should then read a chapter called “Providence,” by Synesius, translated into English by Thomas Taylor, he will find it one of the majestic remains of literature, and, like one walking in the noblest of temples, will

conceive new gratitude to his fellow-men, and a new estimate of their nobility. The imaginative scholar will find few stimulants to his brain like these writers. He has entered the Elysian Fields; and the grand and pleasing figures of gods and demons and demoniacal men, of the "azonic" and the "aquatic gods," demons with fulgid eyes, and all the rest of the Platonic rhetoric, exalted a little under the African sun, sail before his eyes. The acolyte has mounted the tripod over the cave at Delphi; his heart dances, his sight is quickened. These guides speak of the gods with such depth and with such pictorial details, as if they had been bodily present at the Olympian feasts. The reader of these books makes new acquaintance with his own mind; new regions of thought are opened. Jamblichus's "Life of Pythagoras" works more directly on the will than the others; since Pythagoras was eminently a practical person, the founder of a school of ascetics and socialists, a planter of colonies, and nowise a man of abstract studies alone.

The respectable and sometimes excellent translations of Bohn's Library have done for literature what railroads have done for inter-

nal intercourse. I do not hesitate to read all the books I have named, and all good books, in translations. What is really best in any book is translatable, — any real insight or broad human sentiment. Nay, I observe that, in our Bible, and other books of lofty moral tone, it seems easy and inevitable to render the rhythm and music of the original into phrases of equal melody. The Italians have a fling at translators, — *i traditori traduttori*; but I thank them. I rarely read any Latin, Greek, German, Italian, sometimes not a French book in the original, which I can procure in a good version. I like to be beholden to the great metropolitan English speech, the sea which receives tributaries from every region under heaven. I should as soon think of swimming across Charles River when I wish to go to Boston, as of reading all my books in originals, when I have them rendered for me in my mother-tongue.

For history there is great choice of ways to bring the student through early Rome. If he can read Livy, he has a good book; but one of the short English compends, some Goldsmith or Ferguson, should be used, that will place in the cycle the bright stars of Plutarch.

The poet Horace is the eye of the Augustan age; Tacitus, the wisest of historians; and Martial will give him Roman manners — and some very bad ones — in the early days of the Empire: but Martial must be read, if read at all, in his own tongue. These will bring him to Gibbon, who will take him in charge, and convey him with abundant entertainment down — with notice of all remarkable objects on the way — through fourteen hundred years of time. He cannot spare Gibbon, with his vast reading, — with such wit and continuity of mind, that, though never profound, his book is one of the conveniences of civilization, like the new railroad from ocean to ocean, — and, I think, will be sure to send the reader to his “Memoirs of Himself,” and the “Extracts from my Journal,” and “Abstracts of my Readings,” which will spur the laziest scholar to emulation of his prodigious performance.

Now having our idler safe down as far as the fall of Constantinople in 1453, he is in very good courses; for here are trusty hands waiting for him. The cardinal facts of European history are soon learned. There is Dante’s poem, to open the Italian Republics

of the Middle Age; Dante's "Vita Nuova," to explain Dante and Beatrice; and Boccaccio's "Life of Dante," — a great man to describe a greater. To help us, perhaps a volume or two of M. Sismondi's "Italian Republics" will be as good as the entire sixteen. When we come to Michel Angelo, his Sonnets and Letters must be read, with his Life by Vasari, or, in our day, by Herman Grimm. For the Church, and the Feudal Institution, Mr. Hallam's "Middle Ages" will furnish, if superficial, yet readable and conceivable outlines.

The "Life of the Emperor Charles V.," by the useful Robertson, is still the key of the following age. Ximenes, Columbus, Loyola, Luther, Erasmus, Melanchthon, Francis I., Henry VIII., Elizabeth, and Henry IV. of France are his contemporaries. It is a time of seeds and expansions, whereof our recent civilization is the fruit.

If now the relations of England to European affairs bring him to British ground, he is arrived at the very moment when modern history takes new proportions. He can look back for the legends and mythology to the "Younger Edda" and the "Heimskringla" of

Snorro Sturleson, to Mallet's "Northern Antiquities," to Ellis's "Metrical Romances," to Asser's "Life of Alfred" and Venerable Bede, and to the researches of Sharon Turner and Palgrave. Hume will serve him for an intelligent guide, and in the Elizabethan era he is at the richest period of the English mind, with the chief men of action and of thought which that nation has produced, and with a pregnant future before him. Here he has Shakespeare, Spenser, Sidney, Raleigh, Bacon, Chapman, Jonson, Ford, Beaumont and Fletcher, Herbert, Donne, Herrick; and Milton, Marvell, and Dryden, not long after.

In reading history, he is to prefer the history of individuals. He will not repent the time he gives to Bacon, — not if he read the "Advancement of Learning," the "Essays," the "Novum Organum," the "History of Henry VIII.," and then all the "Letters" (especially those to the Earl of Devonshire, explaining the Essex business), and all but his "Apophthegms."

The task is aided by the strong mutual light which these men shed on each other. Thus, the works of Ben Jonson are a sort of hoop to bind all these fine persons together, and to

the land to which they belong. He has written verses to or on all his notable contemporaries; and what with so many occasional poems, and the portrait sketches in his "Discoveries," and the gossiping record of his opinions in his conversations with Drummond of Hawthornden, he has really illustrated the England of his time, if not to the same extent, yet much in the same way, as Walter Scott has celebrated the persons and places of Scotland. Walton, Chapman, Herrick, and Sir Henry Wotton write also to the times.

Among the best books are certain *Autobiographies*: as, St. Augustine's Confessions; Benvenuto Cellini's Life; Montaigne's Essays; Lord Herbert of Cherbury's Memoirs; Memoirs of the Cardinal de Retz; Rousseau's Confessions; Linnæus's Diary; Gibbon's, Hume's, Franklin's, Burns's, Alfieri's, Goethe's, and Haydon's Autobiographies.

Another class of books closely allied to these, and of like interest, are those which may be called *Table-Talks*: of which the best are Saadi's Gulistan; Luther's Table-Talk; Aubrey's Lives; Spence's Anecdotes; Selden's Table-Talk; Boswell's Life of Johnson; Eckermann's Conversations with Goethe;

Coleridge's Table-Talk; and Hazlitt's Life of Northcote.

There is a class whose value I should designate as *Favorites*: such as Froissart's Chronicles; Southey's Chronicle of the Cid; Cervantes; Sully's Memoirs; Rabelais; Montaigne; Izaak Walton; Evelyn; Sir Thomas Browne; Aubrey; Sterne; Horace Walpole; Lord Clarendon; Doctor Johnson; Burke, shedding floods of light on his times; Lamb; Landor; and De Quincey; — a list, of course, that may easily be swelled, as dependent on individual caprice. Many men are as tender and irritable as lovers in reference to these predilections. Indeed, a man's library is a sort of harem, and I observe that tender readers have a great pudency in showing their books to a stranger.

The annals of bibliography afford many examples of the delirious extent to which book-fancying can go, when the legitimate delight in a book is transferred to a rare edition or to a manuscript. This mania reached its height about the beginning of the present century. For an autograph of Shakespeare one hundred and fifty-five guineas were given. In May, 1812, the library of the Duke of

Roxburgh was sold. The sale lasted forty-two days, — we abridge the story from Dibdin, — and among the many curiosities was a copy of Boccaccio published by Valdarfer, at Venice, in 1471; the only perfect copy of this edition. Among the distinguished company which attended the sale were the Duke of Devonshire, Earl Spencer, and the Duke of Marlborough, then Marquis of Blandford. The bid stood at five hundred guineas. “A thousand guineas,” said Earl Spencer. “And ten,” added the Marquis. You might hear a pin drop. All eyes were bent on the bidders. Now they talked apart, now ate a biscuit, now made a bet, but without the least thought of yielding one to the other. But to pass over some details, — the contest proceeded until the Marquis said, “Two thousand pounds.” The Earl Spencer bethought him like a prudent general of useless bloodshed and waste of powder, and had paused a quarter of a minute, when Lord Althorp with long steps came to his side, as if to bring his father a fresh lance to renew the fight. Father and son whispered together, and Earl Spencer exclaimed, “Two thousand two hundred and fifty pounds!” An electric shock went

through the assembly. "And ten," quietly added the Marquis. There ended the strife. Ere Evans let the hammer fall, he paused; the ivory instrument swept the air; the spectators stood dumb, when the hammer fell. The stroke of its fall sounded on the farthest shores of Italy. The tap of that hammer was heard in the libraries of Rome, Milan, and Venice. Boccaccio stirred in his sleep of five hundred years, and M. Van Praet groped in vain among the royal alcoves in Paris, to detect a copy of the famed Valdarfer Boccaccio.

Another class I distinguish by the term *Vocabularies*. Burton's "Anatomy of Melancholy" is a book of great learning. To read it is like reading in a dictionary. 'T is an inventory to remind us how many classes and species of facts exist, and, in observing into what strange and multiplex by-ways learning has strayed, to infer our opulence. Neither is a dictionary a bad book to read. There is no cant in it, no excess of explanation, and it is full of suggestion,—the raw material of possible poem and histories. Nothing is wanting but a little shuffling, sorting, ligation, and cartilage. Out of a hundred exam-

ples, Cornelius Agrippa "On the Vanity of Arts and Sciences" is a specimen of that scribationousness which grew to be the habit of the gluttonous readers of his time. Like the modern Germans, they read a literature while other mortals read a few books. They read voraciously, and must disburden themselves; so they take any general topic, as, Melancholy, or Praise of Science, or Praise of Folly, and write and quote without method or end. Now and then out of that affluence of their learning comes a fine sentence from Theophrastus, or Seneca, or Boëthius, but no high method, no inspiring efflux. But one cannot afford to read for a few sentences; they are good only as strings of suggestive words.

There is another class, more needful to the present age, because the currents of custom run now in another direction, and leave us dry on this side; — I mean the *Imaginative*. A right metaphysics should do justice to the co-ordinate powers of Imagination, Insight, Understanding, and Will. Poetry, with its aids of Mythology and Romance, must be well allowed for an imaginative creature. Men are ever lapsing into a beggarly habit,

wherein everything that is not ciphering, that is, which does not serve the tyrannical animal, is hustled out of sight. Our orators and writers are of the same poverty, and, in this rag-fair, neither the Imagination, the great awakening power, nor the Morals, creative of genius and of men, are addressed. But though orator and poet be of this hunger party, the capacities remain. We must have symbols. The child asks you for a story, and is thankful for the poorest. It is not poor to him, but radiant with meaning. The man asks for a novel, — that is, asks leave for a few hours to be a poet, and to paint things as they ought to be. The youth asks for a poem. The very dunces wish to go to the theatre. What private heavens can we not open by yielding to all the suggestion of rich music! We must have idolatries, mythologies, — some swing and verge for the creative power lying coiled and cramped here, driving ardent natures to insanity and crime if it do not find vent. Without the great arts which speak to the sense of beauty, a man seems to me a poor, naked, shivering creature. These are his becoming draperies, which warm and adorn him. Whilst the prudential and eco-

nomical tone of society starves the imagination, affronted Nature gets such indemnity as she may. The novel is that allowance and frolic the imagination finds. Everything else pins it down, and men flee for redress to Byron, Scott, Disraeli, Dumas, Sand, Balzac, Dickens, Thackeray, and Reade. Their education is neglected; but the circulating-library and the theatre, as well as the trout-fishing, the Notch Mountains, the Adirondack country, the tour to Mont Blanc, to the White Hills, and the Ghauts, make such amends as they can.

The imagination infuses a certain volatility and intoxication. It has a flute which sets the atoms of our frame in a dance, like planets; and, once so liberated, the whole man reeling drunk to the music, they never quite subside to their old stony state. But what is the imagination? Only an arm or weapon of the interior energy; only the precursor of the reason. And books that treat the old pedantries of the world, our times, places, professions, customs, opinions, histories, with a certain freedom, and distribute things, not after the usages of America and Europe, but after the laws of right reason, and with as daring a

freedom as we use in dreams, put us on our feet again, enable us to form an original judgment of our duties, and suggest new thoughts for to-morrow.

"Lucrezia Floriani," "Le Péché de M. Antoine," "Jeanne," and "Consuelo," of George Sand, are great steps from the novel of one termination, which we all read twenty years ago. Yet how far off from life and manners and motives the novel still is! Life lies about us dumb; the day, as we know it, has not yet found a tongue. These stories are to the plots of real life what the figures in "La Belle Assemblée," which represent the fashion of the month, are to portraits. But the novel will find the way to our interiors one day, and will not always be the novel of costume merely. I do not think it inoperative now. So much novel-reading cannot leave the young men and maidens untouched; and doubtless it gives some ideal dignity to the day. The young study noble behavior; and as the player in "Consuelo" insists that he and his colleagues on the boards have taught princes the fine etiquette and strokes of grace and dignity which they practise with so much effect in their villas and among their dependants, so I

often see traces of the Scotch or the French novel in the courtesy and brilliancy of young midshipmen, collegians, and clerks. Indeed, when one observes how ill and ugly people make their loves and quarrels, 't is pity they should not read novels a little more, to import the fine generousities, and the clear, firm conduct, which are as becoming in the unions and separations which love effects under shingle roofs as in palaces and among illustrious personages.

In novels the most serious questions are beginning to be discussed. What made the popularity of "Jane Eyre," but that a central question was answered in some sort? The question there answered in regard to a vicious marriage will always be treated according to the habit of the party. A person of commanding individualism will answer it as Rochester does, — as Cleopatra, as Milton, as George Sand do, — magnifying the exception into a rule, dwarfing the world into an exception. A person of less courage, that is, of less constitution, will answer as the heroine does, — giving way to fate, to conventionalism, to the actual state and doings of men and women.

For the most part, our novel-reading is a passion for results. We admire parks, and high-born beauties, and the homage of drawing-rooms, and parliaments. They make us sceptical, by giving prominence to wealth and social position.

I remember when some peering eyes of boys discovered that the oranges hanging on the boughs of an orange-tree in a gay piazza were tied to the twigs by thread. I fear 't is so with the novelist's prosperities. Nature has a magic by which she fits the man to his fortunes, by making them the fruit of his character. But the novelist plucks this event here, and that fortune there, and ties them rashly to his figures, to tickle the fancy of his readers with a cloying success, or scare them with shocks of tragedy. And so, on the whole, 't is a juggle. We are cheated into laughter or wonder by feats which only oddly combine acts that we do every day. There is no new element, no power, no furtherance. 'T is only confectionery, not the raising of new corn. Great is the poverty of their inventions. *She was beautiful, and he fell in love.* Money, and killing, and the Wandering Jew, and persuading the lover that his mistress is

betrothed to another, — these are the main-springs: new names, but no new qualities in the men and women. Hence the vain endeavor to keep any bit of this fairy gold, which has rolled like a brook through our hands. A thousand thoughts awoke; great rainbows seemed to span the sky, — a morning among the mountains; but we close the book, and not a ray remains in the memory of evening. But this passion for romance, and this disappointment, show how much we need real elevations and pure poetry; that which shall show us, in morning and night, in stars and mountains, and in all the plight and circumstance of men, the analogons of our own thoughts, and a like impression made by a just book and by the face of Nature.

If our times are sterile in genius, we must cheer us with books of rich and believing men who had atmosphere and amplitude about them. Every good fable, every mythology, every biography from a religious age, every passage of love, and even philosophy and science, when they proceed from an intellectual integrity, and are not detached and critical, have the imaginative element. The Greek fables, the Persian history (Firdusi), the

“Younger Edda” of the Scandinavians, the “Chronicle of the Cid,” the poem of Dante, the Sonnets of Michel Angelo, the English drama of Shakespeare, Beaumont and Fletcher, and Ford, and even the prose of Bacon and Milton, — in our time, the Ode of Wordsworth, and the poems and the prose of Goethe, have this enlargement, and inspire hope and generous attempts.

There is no room left, — and yet I might as well not have begun as to leave out a class of books which are the best: I mean the Bibles of the world, or the sacred books of each nation, which express for each the supreme result of their experience. After the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures, which constitute the sacred books of Christendom, these are, the Desatir of the Persians, and the Zoroastrian Oracles; the Vedas and Laws of Menu; the Upanishads, the Vishnu Purana, the Bhagvat Geeta, of the Hindoos; the books of the Buddhists; the “Chinese Classic,” of four books, containing the wisdom of Confucius and Mencius. Also such other books as have acquired a semi-canonical authority in the world, as expressing the highest sentiment and hope of nations. Such are the “Hermes Trismegis-

tus," pretending to be Egyptian remains; the "Sentences" of Epictetus; of Marcus Antoninus; the "Vishnu Sarma" of the Hindoos; the "Gulistan" of Saadi; the "Imitation of Christ," of Thomas à Kempis; and the "Thoughts" of Pascal.

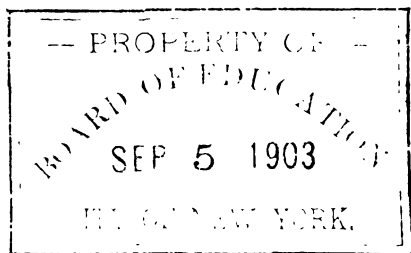
All these books are the majestic expressions of the universal conscience, and are more to our daily purpose than this year's almanac or this day's newspaper. But they are for the closet, and to be read on the bended knee. Their communications are not to be given or taken with the lips and the end of the tongue, but out of the glow of the cheek, and with the throbbing heart. Friendship should give and take, solitude and time brood and ripen, heroes absorb and enact them. They are not to be held by letters printed on a page, but are living characters translatable into every tongue and form of life. I read them on lichens and bark; I watch them on waves on the beach; they fly in birds, they creep in worms; I detect them in laughter and blushes and eye-sparkles of men and women. These are Scriptures which the missionary might well carry over prairie, desert, and ocean, to Siberia, Japan, Timbuc-

too. Yet he will find that the spirit which is in them journeys faster than he, and greets him on his arrival, — was there already long before him. The missionary must be carried by it, and find it there, or he goes in vain. Is there any geography in these things? We call them Asiatic, we call them primeval; but perhaps that is only optical; for Nature is always equal to herself, and there are as good eyes and ears now in the planet as ever were. Only these ejaculations of the soul are uttered one or a few at a time, at long intervals, and it takes millenniums to make a Bible.

These are a few of the books which the old and the later times have yielded us, which will reward the time spent on them. In comparing the number of good books with the shortness of life, many might well be read by proxy, if we had good proxies; and it would be well for sincere young men to borrow a hint from the French Institute and the British Association, and, as they divide the whole body into sections, each of which sits upon and reports of certain matters confided to it, so let each scholar associate himself to such persons as he can rely on, in a literary club, in which each shall undertake a single work or

series for which he is qualified. For example, how attractive is the whole literature of the "Roman de la Rose," the "Fabliaux," and the *gaie science* of the French Troubadours! Yet who in Boston has time for that? But one of our company shall undertake it, shall study and master it, and shall report on it, as under oath; shall give us the sincere result, as it lies in his mind, adding nothing, keeping nothing back. Another member, meantime, shall as honestly search, sift, and as truly report, on British mythology, the Round Table, the histories of Brut, Merlin, and Welsh poetry; a third on the Saxon Chronicles, Robert of Gloucester, and William of Malmesbury; a fourth, on Mysteries, Early Drama, "Gesta Romanorum," Collier, and Dyce, and the Camden Society. Each shall give us his grains of gold, after the washing; and every other shall then decide whether this is a book indispensable to him also.







ART.

ALL departments of life at the present day—Trade, Politics, Letters, Science, or Religion — seem to feel, and to labor to express, the identity of their law. They are rays of one sun ; they translate each into a new language the sense of the other. They are sublime when seen as emanations of a Necessity contradistinguished from the vulgar Fate, by being instant and alive, and dissolving man, as well as his works, in its flowing beneficence. This influence is conspicuously visible in the principles and history of Art.

On one side in primary communication with absolute truth through thought and instinct, the human mind on the other side tends, by an equal necessity, to the publication and embodiment of its thought, modified and dwarfed by the impurity and untruth which,

in all our experience, injure the individuality through which it passes. The child not only suffers, but cries ; not only hungers, but eats. The man not only thinks, but speaks and acts. Every thought that arises in the mind, in its rising aims to pass out of the mind into act ; just as every plant, in the moment of germination, struggles up to light. Thought is the seed of action ; but action is as much its second form as thought is its first. It rises in thought, to the end that it may be uttered and acted. The more profound the thought, the more burdensome. Always in proportion to the depth of its sense does it knock importunately at the gates of the soul, to be spoken, to be done. What is in, will out. It struggles to the birth. Speech is a great pleasure, and action a great pleasure ; they cannot be foreborne.

The utterance of thought and emotion in speech and action may be conscious or unconscious. The sucking child is an unconscious actor. The man in an ecstasy of fear or anger is an unconscious actor. A large part of our habitual actions are unconsciously done, and most of our necessary words are unconsciously said.

The conscious utterance of thought, by speech or action, to any end, is Art. From the first imitative babble of a child to the despotism of eloquence, from his first pile of toys or clip bridge to the masonry of Minot Rock Lighthouse or the Pacific Railroad, from the tattooing of the Owhyhees to the Vatican Gallery, from the simplest expedient of private prudence to the American Constitution, from its first to its last works, Art is the spirit's voluntary use and combination of things to serve its end. The Will distinguishes it as spiritual action. Relatively to themselves, the bee, the bird, the beaver, have no art; for what they do, they do instinctively; but relatively to the Supreme Being, they have. And the same is true of all unconscious action: relatively to the doer, it is instinct; relatively to the First Cause, it is Art. In this sense, recognizing the Spirit which informs Nature, Plato rightly said, "Those things which are said to be done by Nature are indeed done by Divine Art." Art, universally, is the spirit creative. It was defined by Aristotle, "The reason of the thing without the matter."

If we follow the popular distinction of works according to their aim, we should say,

the Spirit, in its creation, aims at use or at beauty, and hence Art divides itself into the Useful and the Fine Arts.

The useful arts comprehend not only those that lie next to instinct, as agriculture, building, weaving, etc., but also navigation, practical chemistry, and the construction of all the grand and delicate tools and instruments by which man serves himself; as language, the watch, the ship, the decimal cipher; and also the sciences, so far as they are made serviceable to political economy.

When we reflect on the pleasure we receive from a ship, a railroad, a dry-dock, or from a picture, a dramatic representation, a statue, a poem, we find that these have not a quite simple, but a blended origin. We find that the question, What is Art? leads us directly to another, — Who is the artist? and the solution of this is the key to the history of Art.

I hasten to state the principle which prescribes, through different means, its firm law to the useful and the beautiful arts. The law is this. The universal soul is the alone creator of the useful and the beautiful; therefore, to make anything useful or beautiful, the individual must be submitted to the universal mind.

In the first place, let us consider this in reference to the useful arts. Here the omnipotent agent is Nature; all human acts are satellites to her orb. Nature is the representative of the universal mind, and the law becomes this,—that Art must be a complement to nature, strictly subsidiary. It was said, in allusion to the great structures of the ancient Romans,—the aqueducts and bridges,—that “their Art was a Nature working to municipal ends.” That is a true account of all just works of useful art. Smeaton built Eddystone Lighthouse on the model of an oak-tree, as being the form in nature best designed to resist a constant assailing force. Dollond formed his achromatic telescope on the model of the human eye. Duhamel built a bridge by letting in a piece of stronger timber for the middle of the under surface, getting his hint from the structure of the shin-bone.

The first and last lesson of the useful arts is, that Nature tyrannizes over our works. They must be conformed to her law, or they will be ground to powder by her omnipresent activity. Nothing droll, nothing whimsical, will endure. Nature is ever interfering with

Art. You cannot build your house or pagoda as you will, but as you must. There is a quick bound set to your caprice. The leaning tower can only lean so far. The veranda or pagoda roof can curve upward only to a certain point. The slope of your roof is determined by the weight of snow. It is only within narrow limits that the discretion of the architect may range: gravity, wind, sun, rain, the size of men and animals, and such like, have more to say than he. It is the law of fluids that prescribes the shape of the boat,—keel, rudder, and bows,—and, in the finer fluid above, the form and tackle of the sails. Man seems to have no option about his tools, but merely the necessity to learn from Nature what will fit best, as if he were fitting a screw or a door. Beneath a necessity thus almighty, what is artificial in man's life seems insignificant. He seems to take his task so minutely from intimations of Nature, that his works become as it were hers, and he is no longer free.

But if we work within this limit, she yields us all her strength. All powerful action is performed by bringing the forces of nature to bear upon our objects. We do not grind corn

or lift the loom by our own strength, but we build a mill in such position as to set the north-wind to play upon our instrument, or the elastic force of steam, or the ebb and flow of the sea. So, in our handiwork, we do few things by muscular force, but we place ourselves in such attitudes as to bring the force of gravity, that is, the weight of the planet, to bear upon the spade or the axe we wield. In short, in all our operations we seek not to use our own, but to bring a quite infinite force to bear.

Let us now consider this law as it affects the works that have beauty for their end, that is, the productions of the Fine Arts. Here again the prominent fact is subordination of man. His art is the least part of his work of art. A great deduction is to be made before we can know his proper contribution to it.

Music, Eloquence, Poetry, Painting, Sculpture, Architecture. This is a rough enumeration of the Fine Arts. I omit Rhetoric, which only respects the form of eloquence and poetry. Architecture and eloquence are mixed arts, whose end is sometimes beauty and sometimes use.

It will be seen that in each of these arts

there is much which is not spiritual. Each has a material basis, and in each the creating intellect is crippled in some degree by the stuff on which it works. The basis of poetry is language, which is material only on one side. It is a demigod. But being applied primarily to the common necessities of man, it is not new-created by the poet for his own ends.

The basis of music is the qualities of the air and the vibrations of sonorous bodies. The pulsation of a stretched string or wire gives the ear the pleasure of sweet sound, before yet the musician has enhanced this pleasure by concords and combinations.

Eloquence, as far as it is a fine art, is modified how much by the material organization of the orator, the tone of the voice, the physical strength, the play of the eye and countenance. All this is so much deduction from the purely spiritual pleasure, — as so much deduction from the merit of Art, — and is the attribute of Nature.

In painting, bright colors stimulate the eye, before yet they are harmonized into a landscape. In sculpture and in architecture the material, as marble or granite, and in architecture the mass, are sources of great pleasure,

quite independent of the artificial arrangement. The art resides in the model, in the plan; for it is on that the genius of the artist is expended, not on the statue or the temple. Just as much better as is the polished statue of dazzling marble than the clay model, or as much more impressive as is the granite cathedral or pyramid than the ground-plan or profile of them on paper, so much more beauty owe they to Nature than to Art.

There is a still larger deduction to be made from the genius of the artist in favor of Nature than I have yet specified.

A jumble of musical sounds on a viol or a flute, in which the rhythm of the tune is played without one of the notes being right, gives pleasure to the unskilful ear. A very coarse imitation of the human form on canvas, or in wax-work, — a coarse sketch in colors of a landscape, in which imitation is all that is attempted, — these things give to unpractised eyes, to the uncultured, who do not ask a fine spiritual delight, almost as much pleasure as a statue of Canova or a picture of Titian.

And in the statue of Canova, or the picture of Titian, these give the great part of the pleasure; they are the basis on which the fine

spirit rears a higher delight, but to which these are indispensable.

Another deduction from the genius of the artist is what is conventional in his art, of which there is much in every work of art. Thus how much is there that is not original in every particular building, in every statue, in every tune, painting, poem, or harangue! — whatever is national or usual; as the usage of building all Roman churches in the form of a cross, the prescribed distribution of parts of a theatre, the custom of draping a statue in classical costume. Yet who will deny that the merely conventional part of the performance contributes much to its effect?

One consideration more exhausts, I believe, all the deductions from the genius of the artist in any given work. This is the adventitious. Thus the pleasure that a noble temple gives us is only in part owing to the temple. It is exalted by the beauty of sunlight, the play of the clouds, the landscape around it, its grouping with the houses, trees, and towers in its vicinity. The pleasure of eloquence is in greatest part owing often to the stimulus of the occasion which produces it, — to the magic of sympathy, which exalts the feeling of each by radiating on him the feeling of all.

The effect of music belongs how much to the place, — as the church, or the moonlight walk ; or to the company ; or, if on the stage, to what went before in the play, or to the expectation of what shall come after.

In poetry, "It is tradition more than invention that helps the poet to a good fable." The adventitious beauty of poetry may be felt in the greater delight which a verse gives in happy quotation than in the poem.

It is a curious proof of our conviction that the artist does not feel himself to be the parent of his work, and is as much surprised at the effect as we, that we are so unwilling to impute our best sense of any work of art to the author. The highest praise we can attribute to any writer, painter, sculptor, builder, is, that he actually possessed the thought or feeling with which he has inspired us. We hesitate at doing Spenser so great an honor as to think that he intended by his allegory the sense we affix to it. We grudge to Homer the wide human circumspection his commentators ascribe to him. Even Shakspeare, of whom we can believe everything, we think indebted to Goethe and to Coleridge for the wisdom they detect in his Hamlet and Antony. Especially have we

this infirmity of faith in contemporary genius. We fear that Allston and Greenough did not foresee and design all the effect they produce on us.

Our arts are happy hits. We are like the musician on the lake, whose melody is sweeter than he knows, or like a traveller, surprised by a mountain echo, whose trivial word returns to him in romantic thunders.

In view of these facts, I say that the power of Nature predominates over the human will in all works of even the fine arts, in all that respects their material and external circumstances. Nature paints the best part of the picture; carves the best part of the statue; builds the best part of the house; and speaks the best part of the oration. For all the advantages to which I have adverted are such as the artist did not consciously produce. He relied on their aid, he put himself in the way to receive aid from some of them; but he saw that his planting and his watering waited for the sunlight of Nature, or were vain.

Let us proceed to the consideration of the law stated in the beginning of this essay, as it affects the purely spiritual part of a work of art.

As, in useful art, so far as it is useful, the work must be strictly subordinated to the laws of Nature, so as to become a sort of continuation, and in no wise a contradiction of Nature ; so, in art that aims at beauty, must the parts be subordinated to Ideal Nature, and everything individual abstracted, so that it shall be the production of the universal soul.

The artist who is to produce a work which is to be admired, not by his friends or his townspeople or his contemporaries, but by all men, and which is to be more beautiful to the eye in proportion to its culture, must disindividualize himself, and be a man of no party, and no manner, and no age, but one through whom the soul of all men circulates, as the common air through his lungs. He must work in the spirit in which we conceive a prophet to speak, or an angel of the Lord to act ; that is, he is not to speak his own words, or do his own works, or think his own thoughts, but he is to be an organ through which the universal mind acts.

In speaking of the useful arts, I pointed to the fact that we do not dig, or grind, or hew, by our muscular strength, but by bringing the weight of the planet to bear on the spade, axe,

or bar. Precisely analogous to this, in the fine arts, is the manner of our intellectual work. We aim to hinder our individuality from acting. So much as we can shove aside our egotism, our prejudice, and will, and bring the omniscience of reason upon the subject before us, so perfect is the work. The wonders of Shakspeare are things which he saw whilst he stood aside, and then returned to record them. The poet aims at getting observations without aim ; to subject to thought things seen without (voluntary) thought.

In eloquence, the great triumphs of the art are, when the orator is lifted above himself ; when consciously he makes himself the mere tongue of the occasion and the hour, and says what cannot but be said. Hence the term *abandonment*, to describe the self-surrender of the orator. Not his will, but the principle on which he is horsed, the great connection and crisis of events, thunder in the ear of the crowd.

In poetry, where every word is free, every word is necessary. Good poetry could not have been otherwise written than it is. The first time you hear it, it sounds rather as if copied out of some invisible tablet in the Eter-

nal mind, than as if arbitrarily composed by the poet. The feeling of all great poets has accorded with this. They found the verse, not made it. The muse brought it to them.

In sculpture, did ever anybody call the Apollo a fancy piece? Or say of the Laocoön how it might be made different? A masterpiece of art has in the mind a fixed place in the chain of being, as much as a plant or a crystal.

The whole language of men, especially of artists, in reference to this subject, points at the belief that every work of art, in proportion to its excellence, partakes of the precision of fate: no room was there for choice, no play for fancy; for in the moment, or in the successive moments, when that form was seen, the iron lids of Reason were unclosed, which ordinarily are heavy with slumber. The individual mind became for the moment the vent of the mind of humanity.

There is but one Reason. The mind that made the world is not one mind, but *the* mind. Every man is an inlet to the same, and to all of the same. And every work of art is a more or less pure manifestation of the same. Therefore we arrive at this conclusion, which I offer as a confirmation of the whole view, that the

delight which a work of art affords, seems to arise from our recognizing in it the mind that formed Nature, again in active operation.

It differs from the works of Nature in this, that they are organically reproductive. This is not; but spiritually it is prolific by its powerful action on the intellects of men.

Hence it follows that a study of admirable works of art sharpens our perceptions of the beauty of Nature; that a certain analogy reigns throughout the wonders of both; that the contemplation of a work of great art draws us into a state of mind which may be called religious. It conspires with all exalted sentiments.

Proceeding from absolute mind, whose nature is goodness as much as truth, the great works are always attuned to moral nature. If the earth and sea conspire with virtue more than vice, — so do the masterpieces of art. The galleries of ancient sculpture in Naples and Rome strike no deeper conviction into the mind than the contrast of the purity, the severity, expressed in these fine old heads, with the frivolity and grossness of the mob that exhibits and the mob that gazes at them. These are the countenances of the first-born, — the

face of man in the morning of the world. No mark is on these lofty features, of sloth, or luxury, or meanness, and they surprise you with a moral admonition, as they speak of nothing around you, but remind you of the fragrant thoughts and the purest resolutions of your youth.

Herein is the explanation of the analogies which exist in all the arts. They are the re-appearance of one mind, working in many materials to many temporary ends. Raphael paints wisdom; Handel sings it, Phidias carves it, Shakspeare writes it, Wren builds it, Columbus sails it, Luther preaches it, Washington arms it, Watt mechanizes it. Painting was called "silent poetry"; and poetry, "speaking painting." The laws of each art are convertible into the laws of every other.

Herein we have an explanation of the necessity that reigns in all the kingdom of Art.

Arising out of eternal Reason, one and perfect, whatever is beautiful rests on the foundation of the necessary. Nothing is arbitrary, nothing is insulated in beauty. It depends forever on the necessary and the useful. The plumage of the bird, the mimic

plumage of the insect, has a reason for its rich colors in the constitution of the animal. Fitness is so inseparable an accompaniment of beauty, that it has been taken for it. The most perfect form to answer an end is so far beautiful. We feel, in seeing a noble building, which rhymes well, as we do in hearing a perfect song, that it is spiritually organic; that is, had a necessity, in nature, for being, was one of the possible forms in the Divine mind, and is now only discovered and executed by the artist, not arbitrarily composed by him.

And so every genuine work of art has as much reason for being as the earth and the sun. The gayest charm of beauty has a root in the constitution of things. The *Iliad* of Homer, the songs of David, the odes of Pindar, the tragedies of Æschylus, the Doric temples, the Gothic cathedrals, the plays of Shakspeare, all and each were made not for sport, but in grave earnest, in tears and smiles of suffering and loving men.

Viewed from this point, the history of Art becomes intelligible, and, moreover, one of the most agreeable studies. We see how each work of art sprang irresistibly from necessity,

and, moreover, took its form from the broad hint of Nature. Beautiful in this wise is the obvious origin of all the known orders of architecture; namely, that they were the idealizing of the primitive abodes of each people. There was no wilfulness in the savages in this perpetuating of their first rude abodes. The first form in which they built a house would be the first form of their public and religious edifice also. This form becomes immediately sacred in the eyes of their children, and, as more traditions cluster round it, is imitated with more splendor in each succeeding generation.

In like manner, it has been remarked by Goethe that the granite breaks into parallelopipeds, which broken in two, one part would be an obelisk; that in Upper Egypt the inhabitants would naturally mark a memorable spot by setting up so conspicuous a stone. Again, he suggested, we may see in any stone-wall, on a fragment of rock, the projecting veins of harder stone, which have resisted the action of frost and water which has decomposed the rest. This appearance certainly gave the hint of the hieroglyphics inscribed on their obelisk. The amphitheatre of the old Romans, — any

one may see its origin who looks at the crowd running together to see any fight, sickness, or odd appearance in the street. The first comers gather round in a circle; those behind stand on tiptoe; and farther back they climb on fences or window-sills, and so make a cup of which the object of attention occupies the hollow area. The architect put benches in this, and enclosed the cup with a wall,—and, behold a coliseum!

It would be easy to show of many fine things in the world,—in the customs of nations, the etiquette of courts, the constitution of governments,—the origin in quite simple local necessities. Heraldry, for example, and the ceremonies of a coronation, are a dignified repetition of the occurrences that might befall a dragoon and his footboy. The College of Cardinals were originally the parish priests of Rome. The leaning towers originated from the civil discords which induced every lord to build a tower. Then it became a point of family pride,—and for more pride the novelty of a leaning tower was built.

This strict dependence of Art upon material and ideal Nature, this adamant necessity which underlies it, has made all its past, and

may foreshow its future history. It never was in the power of any man, or any community, to call the arts into being. They come to serve his actual wants, never to please his fancy. These arts have their origin always in some enthusiasm, as love, patriotism, or religion. Who carved marble? The believing man, who wished to symbolize their gods to the waiting Greeks.

The Gothic cathedrals were built when the builder and the priest and the people were overpowered by their faith. Love and fear laid every stone. The Madonnas of Raphael and Titian were made to be worshipped. Tragedy was instituted for the like purpose, and the miracles of music : all sprang out of some genuine enthusiasm, and never out of dilettanteism and holidays. Now they languish, because their purpose is merely exhibition. Who cares, who knows what works of art our government have ordered to be made for the Capitol? They are a mere flourish to please the eye of persons who have associations with books and galleries. But in Greece, the Demos of Athens divided into political factions upon the merits of Phidias.

In this country, at this time, other interests

than religion and patriotism are predominant, and the arts, the daughters of enthusiasm, do not flourish. The genuine offspring of our ruling passions we behold. Popular institutions, the school, the reading-room, the telegraph, the post-office, the exchange, the insurance-company, and the immense harvest of economical inventions, are the fruit of the equality and the boundless liberty of lucrative callings. These are superficial wants; and their fruits are these superficial institutions. But as far as they accelerate the end of political freedom and national education, they are preparing the soil of man for fairer flowers and fruits in another age. For beauty, truth, and goodness are not obsolete; they spring eternal in the breast of man; they are as indigenous in Massachusetts as in Tuscany or the Isles of Greece. And that Eternal Spirit, whose triple face they are, moulds from them forever, for his mortal child, images to remind him of the Infinite and Fair.





ELOQUENCE.

IT is the doctrine of the popular music-masters, that whoever can speak can sing. So, probably, every man is eloquent once in his life. Our temperaments differ in capacity of heat, or, we boil at different degrees. One man is brought to the boiling-point by the excitement of conversation in the parlor. The waters, of course, are not very deep. He has a two-inch enthusiasm, a pattypan ebullition. Another requires the additional caloric of a multitude, and a public debate ; a third needs an antagonist, or a hot indignation ; a fourth needs a revolution ; and a fifth, nothing less than the grandeur of absolute ideas, the splendors and shades of Heaven and Hell.

But because every man is an orator, how long soever he may have been a mute, an

assembly of men is so much more susceptible. The eloquence of one stimulates all the rest, some up to the speaking-point, and all others to a degree that makes them good receivers and conductors, and they avenge themselves for their enforced silence by increased loquacity on their return to the fireside.

The plight of these phlegmatic brains is better than that of those who prematurely boil, and who impatiently break silence before their time. Our county conventions often exhibit a small-pot-soon-hot style of eloquence. We are too much reminded of a medical experiment where a series of patients are taking nitrous-oxide gas. Each patient, in turn, exhibits similar symptoms, — redness in the face, volubility, violent gesticulation, delirious attitudes, occasional stamping, an alarming loss of perception of the passage of time, a selfish enjoyment of his sensations, and loss of perception of the sufferings of the audience.

Plato says, that the punishment which the wise suffer, who refuse to take part in the government, is, to live under the government of worse men; and the like regret is suggested to all the auditors, as the penalty of abstain-

ing to speak, — that they shall hear worse orators than themselves.

But this lust to speak marks the universal feeling of the energy of the engine, and the curiosity men feel to touch the springs. Of all the musical instruments on which men play, a popular assembly is that which has the largest compass and variety, and out of which, by genius and study, the most wonderful effects can be drawn. An audience is not a simple addition of the individuals that compose it. Their sympathy gives them a certain social organism, which fills each member, in his own degree, and most of all the orator, as a jar in a battery is charged with the whole electricity of the battery. No one can survey the face of an excited assembly, without being apprised of new opportunity for painting in fire human thought, and being agitated to agitate. How many orators sit mute there below! They come to get justice done to that ear and intuition which no Chatham and no Demosthenes has begun to satisfy.

The Welsh Triads say, "Many are the friends of the golden tongue." Who can wonder at the attractiveness of Parliament, or of Congress, or the bar, for our ambitious

young men, when the highest bribes of society are at the feet of the successful orator? He has his audience at his devotion. All other fames must hush before his. He is the true potentate; for they are not kings who sit on thrones, but they who know how to govern. The definitions of eloquence describe its attraction for young men. Antiphon the Rhamnusian, one of Plutarch's ten orators, advertised in Athens, "that he would cure distempers of the mind with words." No man has a prosperity so high or firm but two or three words can dishearten it. There is no calamity which right words will not begin to redress. Isocrates described his art as "the power of magnifying what was small and diminishing what was great," — an acute but partial definition. Among the Spartans, the art assumed a Spartan shape, namely, of the sharpest weapon. Socrates says: "If any one wishes to converse with the meanest of the Lacedæmonians, he will at first find him despicable in conversation; but, when a proper opportunity offers, this same person, like a skilful jaculator, will hurl a sentence worthy of attention, short and contorted, so that he who converses with him will appear to

be in no respect superior to a boy." Plato's definition of rhetoric is, "the art of ruling the minds of men." The Koran says, "A mountain may change its place, but a man will not change his disposition"; yet the end of eloquence is, — is it not? — to alter in a pair of hours, perhaps in a half-hour's discourse, the convictions and habits of years. Young men, too, are eager to enjoy this sense of added power and enlarged sympathetic existence. The orator sees himself the organ of a multitude, and concentrating their valors and powers :

"But now the blood of twenty thousand men
Blushed in my face."

That which he wishes, that which eloquence ought to reach, is, not a particular skill in telling a story, or neatly summing up evidence, or arguing logically, or dexterously addressing the prejudice of the company, — no, but a taking sovereign possession of the audience. Him we call an artist, who shall play on an assembly of men as a master on the keys of the piano, — who, seeing the people furious, shall soften and compose them, shall draw them, when he will, to laughter and to tears.

Bring him to his audience, and, be they who they may, — coarse or refined, pleased or displeased, sulky or savage, with their opinions in the keeping of a confessor, or with their opinions in their bank-safes, — he will have them pleased and humored as he chooses; and they shall carry and execute that which he bids them.

This is that despotism which poets have celebrated in the "Pied Piper of Hamelin," whose music drew like the power of gravitation, — drew soldiers and priests, traders and feasters, women and boys, rats and mice: or that of the minstrel of Meudon, who made the pall-bearers dance around the bier. This is a power of many degrees, and requiring in the orator a great range of faculty and experience, requiring a large composite man, such as Nature rarely organizes; so that, in our experience, we are forced to gather up the figure in fragments, here one talent, and there another.

The audience is a constant meter of the orator. There are many audiences in every public assembly, each one of which rules in turn. If anything comic and coarse is spoken, you shall see the emergence of the boys and

rowdies, so loud and vivacious that you might think the house was filled with them. If new topics are started, graver and higher, these roisters recede; a more chaste and wise attention takes place. You would think the boys slept, and that the men have any degree of profoundness. If the speaker utter a noble sentiment, the attention deepens, a new and highest audience now listens, and the audiences of the fun and of facts and of the understanding are all silenced and awed. There is also something excellent in every audience, — the capacity of virtue. They are ready to be beatified. They know so much more than the orator, — and are so just! There is a tablet there for every line he can inscribe, though he should mount to the highest levels. Humble persons are conscious of new illumination; narrow brows expand with enlarged affections; — delicate spirits, long unknown to themselves, masked and muffled in coarsest fortunes, who now hear their own native language for the first time, and leap to hear it. But all these several audiences, each above each, which successively appear to greet the variety of style and topic, are really composed out of the same persons; nay, sometimes the same individual will take active part in them all, in turn.

This range of many powers in the consummate speaker, and of many audiences in one assembly, leads us to consider the successive stages of oratory.

Perhaps it is the lowest of the qualities of an orator, but it is, on so many occasions, of chief importance, — a certain robust and radiant physical health ; or, — shall I say ? — great volumes of animal heat. When each auditor feels himself to make too large a part of the assembly, and shudders with cold at the thinness of the morning audience, and with fear lest all will heavily fail through one bad speech, mere energy and mellowness are then inestimable. Wisdom and learning would be harsh and unwelcome, compared with a substantial cordial man, made of milk, as we say, who is a house-warmer, with his obvious honesty and good meaning, and a hue-and-cry style of harangue, which inundates the assembly with a flood of animal spirits, and makes all safe and secure, so that any and every sort of good speaking becomes at once practicable. I do not rate this animal eloquence very highly ; and yet, as we must be fed and warmed before we can do any work well, — even the best, — so is this semi-animal exuberance, like a good stove, of the first necessity in a cold house.

Climate has much to do with it, — climate and race. Set a New-Englander to describe any accident which happened in his presence. What hesitation and reserve in his narrative ! He tells with difficulty some particulars, and gets as fast as he can to the result, and, though he cannot describe, hopes to suggest the whole scene. Now listen to a poor Irishwoman recounting some experience of hers. Her speech flows like a river, — so unconsidered, so humorous, so pathetic, such justice done to all the parts ! It is a true transubstantiation, — the fact converted into speech, all warm and colored and alive, as it fell out. Our Southern people are almost all speakers, and have every advantage over the New England people, whose climate is so cold that, 't is said, we do not like to open our mouths very wide. But neither can the Southerner in the United States, nor the Irish, compare with the lively inhabitant of the South of Europe. The traveller in Sicily needs no gayer melodramatic exhibition than the *table d'hôte* of his inn will afford him in the conversation of the joyous guests. They mimic the voice and manner of the person they describe ; they crow, squeal, hiss, cackle, bark, and scream like mad, and,

were it only by the physical strength exerted in telling the story, keep the table in unbounded excitement. But in every constitution some large degree of animal vigor is necessary as material foundation for the higher qualities of the art.

But eloquence must be attractive, or it is none. The virtue of books is, to be readable, and of orators, to be interesting; and this is a gift of Nature; as Demosthenes, the most laborious student in that kind, signified his sense of this necessity when he wrote, "Good Fortune," as his motto on his shield. As we know, the power of discourse of certain individuals amounts to fascination, though it may have no lasting effect. Some portion of this sugar must intermingle. The right eloquence needs no bell to call the people together, and no constable to keep them. It draws the children from their play, the old from their arm-chairs, the invalid from his warm chamber: it holds the hearer fast; steals away his feet, that he shall not depart, — his memory, that he shall not remember the most pressing affairs, — his belief, that he shall not admit any opposing considerations. The pictures we have of it in semi-barbarous ages,

when it has some advantages in the simpler habit of the people, show what it aims at. It is said that the Khans, or story-tellers, in Ispahan and other cities of the East, attain a controlling power over their audience, keeping them for many hours attentive to the most fanciful and extravagant adventures. The whole world knows pretty well the style of these improvisators, and how fascinating they are, in our translations of the "Arabian Nights." Scheherezade tells these stories to save her life, and the delight of young Europe and young America in them proves that she fairly earned it. And who does not remember in childhood some white or black or yellow Scheherezade, who, by that talent of telling endless feats of fairies and magicians, and kings and queens, was more dear and wonderful to a circle of children than any orator in England or America is now? The more indolent and imaginative complexion of the Eastern nations makes them much more impressible by these appeals to the fancy.

These legends are only exaggerations of real occurrences, and every literature contains these high compliments to the art of the orator and the bard, from the Hebrew and the Greek down to the Scottish Glenkindie, who

“ harpit a fish out o’ saut-water,
Or water out of a stone,
Or milk out of a maiden’s breast
Who hairn had never none.”

Homer especially delighted in drawing the same figure. For what is the “Odyssey” but a history of the orator, in the largest style, carried through a series of adventures furnishing brilliant opportunities to his talent? See with what care and pleasure the poet brings him on the stage. Helen is pointing out to Priam, from a tower, the different Grecian chiefs. “The old man asked: ‘Tell me, dear child, who is that man, shorter by a head than Agamemnon, yet he looks broader in his shoulders and breast. His arms lie on the ground, but he, like a leader, walks about the bands of the men. He seems to me like a stately ram, who goes as a master of the flock.’ Him answered Helen, daughter of Jove: ‘This is the wise Ulysses, son of Laertes, who was reared in the state of craggy Ithaca, knowing all wiles and wise counsels.’ To her the prudent Antenor replied again: ‘O woman, you have spoken truly. For once the wise Ulysses came hither on an embassy, with

Menelaus, beloved by Mars. I received them, and entertained them at my house. I became acquainted with the genius and the prudent judgments of both. When they mixed with the assembled Trojans, and stood, the broad shoulders of Menelaus rose above the other; but, both sitting, Ulysses was more majestic. When they conversed, and interweaved stories and opinions with all, Menelaus spoke succinctly, — few but very sweet words, since he was not talkative, nor superfluous in speech, and was the younger. But when the wise Ulysses arose, and stood, and looked down, fixing his eyes on the ground, and neither moved his sceptre backward nor forward, but held it still, like an awkward person, you would say it was some angry or foolish man; but when he sent his great voice forth out of his breast, and his words fell like the winter snows, not then would any mortal contend with Ulysses; and we, beholding, wondered not afterwards so much at his aspect.'''* Thus he does not fail to arm Ulysses at first with this power of overcoming all opposition by the blandishments of speech. Plutarch tells

* Iliad, III. 191.

us that Thucydides, when Archidamus, king of Sparta, asked him which was the best wrestler, — Pericles or he, — replied, “When I throw him, he says he was never down, and he persuades the very spectators to believe him.” Philip of Macedon said of Demosthenes, on hearing the report of one of his orations, “Had I been there, he would have persuaded me to take up arms against myself”; and Warren Hastings said of Burke’s speech on his impeachment, “As I listened to the orator, I felt for more than half an hour as if I were the most culpable being on earth.”

In these examples, higher qualities have already entered; but the power of detaining the ear by pleasing speech, and addressing the fancy and imagination, often exists without higher merits. Thus separated, as this fascination of discourse aims only at amusement, though it be decisive in its momentary effect, it is yet a juggle, and of no lasting power. It is heard like a band of music passing through the streets, which converts all the passengers into poets, but is forgotten as soon as it has turned the next corner; and unless this oiled tongue could, in Oriental phrase, lick the sun and moon away, it must take its place

with opium and brandy. I know no remedy against it but cotton-wool, or the wax which Ulysses stuffed into the ears of his sailors to pass the sirens safely.

There are all degrees of power, and the least are interesting, but they must not be confounded. There is the glib tongue and cool self-possession of the salesman in a large shop, which, as is well known, overpower the prudence and resolution of housekeepers of both sexes. There is a petty lawyer's fluency, which is sufficiently impressive to him who is devoid of that talent, though it be, in so many cases, nothing more than a facility of expressing with accuracy and speed what everybody thinks and says more slowly, without new information, or precision of thought, — but the same thing, neither less nor more. It requires no special insight to edit one of our country newspapers. Yet whoever can say off currently, sentence by sentence, matter neither better nor worse than what is there printed, will be very impressive to our easily pleased population. These talkers are of that class who prosper, like the celebrated schoolmaster, by being only one lesson ahead of the pupil. Add a little sarcasm, and prompt allusion to

passing occurrences, and you have the mischievous member of Congress. A spice of malice, a ruffian touch in his rhetoric, will do him no harm with his audience. These accomplishments are of the same kind, and only a degree higher than the coaxing of the auctioneer, or the vituperative style well described in the street-word "jawing." These kinds of public and private speaking have their use and convenience to the practitioners; but we may say of such collectively, that the habit of oratory is apt to disqualify them for eloquence.

One of our statesmen said, "The curse of this country is eloquent men." And one cannot wonder at the uneasiness sometimes manifested by trained statesmen, with large experience of public affairs, when they observe the disproportionate advantage suddenly given to oratory over the most solid and accumulated public service. In a Senate or other business committee, the solid result depends on a few men with working-talent. They know how to deal with the facts before them, to put things into a practical shape, and they value men only as they can forward the work. But a new man comes there, who has no capacity for helping them at all, is insignificant, and nobody

in the committee, but has a talent for speaking. In the debate with open doors, this precious person makes a speech, which is printed, and read all over the Union, and he at once becomes famous, and takes the lead in the public mind over all these executive men, who, of course, are full of indignation to find one who has no tact or skill, and knows he has none, put over them by means of this talking-power which they despise.

Leaving behind us these pretensions, better or worse, to come a little nearer to the verity, — eloquence is attractive as an example of the magic of personal ascendancy, — a total and resultant power, rare, because it requires a rich coincidence of powers, intellect, will, sympathy, organs, and, over all, good fortune in the cause. We have a half-belief that the person is possible who can counterpoise all other persons. We believe that there may be a man who is a match for events, — one who never found his match, — against whom other men being dashed are broken, — one of inexhaustible personal resources, who can give you any odds and beat you. What we really wish for is a mind equal to any exigency. You are safe in your rural district, or in the city, in

broad daylight, amidst the police, and under the eyes of a hundred thousand people. But how is it on the Atlantic, in a storm,—do you understand how to infuse your reason into men disabled by terror, and to bring yourself off safe then?—how among thieves, or among an infuriated populace, or among cannibals? Face to face with a highwayman who has every temptation and opportunity for violence and plunder, can you bring yourself off safe by your wit, exercised through speech?—a problem easy enough to Cæsar or Napoleon. Whenever a man of that stamp arrives, the highwayman has found a master. What a difference between men in power of face! A man succeeds because he has more power of eye than another, and so coaxes or confounds him. The newspapers, every week, report the adventures of some impudent swindler, who, by steadiness of carriage, duped those who should have known better. Yet any swindlers we have known are novices and bunglers, as is attested by their ill name. A greater power of face would accomplish anything, and, with the rest of their takings, take away the bad name. A greater power of carrying the thing loftily, and with perfect assurance, would

confound merchant, banker, judge, men of influence and power, — poet and president, — and might head any party, unseat any sovereign, and abrogate any constitution in Europe and America. It was said that a man has at one step attained vast power, who has renounced his moral sentiment, and settled it with himself that he will no longer stick at anything. It was said of Sir William Pepperel, one of the worthies of New England, that, “put him where you might, he commanded, and saw what he willed come to pass.” Julius Cæsar said to Metellus, when that tribune interfered to hinder him from entering the Roman treasury, “Young man, it is easier for me to put you to death than to say that I will”; and the youth yielded. In earlier days, he was taken by pirates. What then? He threw himself into their ship, established the most extraordinary intimacies, told them stories, declaimed to them; if they did not applaud his speeches, he threatened them with hanging, — which he performed afterwards, — and, in a short time, was master of all on board. A man this is who cannot be disconcerted, and so can never play his last card, but has a reserve of power when he has

hit his mark. With a serene face, he subverts a kingdom. What is told of him is miraculous ; it affects men so. The confidence of men in him is lavish, and he changes the face of the world, and histories, poems, and new philosophies arise to account for him. A supreme commander over all his passions and affections ; but the secret of his ruling is higher than that. It is the power of Nature running without impediment from the brain and will into the hands. Men and women are his game. Where they are, he cannot be without resource. "Whoso can speak well," said Luther, "is a man." It was men of this stamp that the Grecian States used to ask of Sparta for generals. They did not send to Lacedæmon for troops, but they said, "Send us a commander" ; and Pausanias, or Gylippus, or Brasidas, or Agis, was despatched by the Ephors.

It is easy to illustrate this overpowering personality by these examples of soldiers and kings ; but there are men of the most peaceful way of life, and peaceful principle, who are felt, wherever they go, as sensibly as a July sun or a December frost, — men who, if they speak, are heard, though they speak in a

whisper, — who, when they act, act effectually, and what they do is imitated; and these examples may be found on very humble platforms, as well as on high ones.

In old countries, a high money-value is set on the services of men who have achieved a personal distinction. He who has points to carry must hire, not a skilful attorney, but a commanding person. A barrister in England is reputed to have made thirty or forty thousand pounds *per annum* in representing the claims of railroad companies before committees of the House of Commons. His clients pay not so much for legal as for manly accomplishments, — for courage, conduct, and a commanding social position, which enable him to make their claims heard and respected.

I know very well, that, among our cool and calculating people, where every man mounts guard over himself, where heats and panics and abandonments are quite out of the system, there is a good deal of scepticism as to extraordinary influence. To talk of an overpowering mind rouses the same jealousy and defiance which one may observe round a table where anybody is recounting the marvellous anecdotes of mesmerism. Each auditor puts

a final stroke to the discourse by exclaiming, "Can he mesmerize *me*?" So each man inquires if any orator can change *his* convictions.

But does any one suppose himself to be quite impregnable? Does he think that not possibly a man may come to him who shall persuade him out of his most settled determination? — for example, good sedate citizen as he is, to make a fanatic of him, — or, if he is penurious, to squander money for some purpose he now least thinks of, — or, if he is a prudent, industrious person, to forsake his work, and give days and weeks to a new interest? No, he defies any one, every one. Ah! he is thinking of resistance, and of a different turn from his own. But what if one should come of the same turn of mind as his own, and who sees much farther on his own way than he? A man who has tastes like mine, but in greater power, will rule me any day, and make me love my ruler.

Thus it is not powers of speech that we primarily consider under this word *eloquence*, but the power that, being present, gives them their perfection, and, being absent, leaves them a merely superficial value. Eloquence

is the appropriate organ of the highest personal energy. Personal ascendancy may exist with or without adequate talent for its expression. It is as surely felt as a mountain or a planet; but when it is weaponed with a power of speech, it seems first to become truly human, works actively in all directions, and supplies the imagination with fine materials.

This circumstance enters into every consideration of the power of orators, and is the key to all their effects. In the assembly, you shall find the orator and the audience in perpetual balance; and the predominance of either is indicated by the choice of topic. If the talents for speaking exist, but not the strong personality, then there are good speakers who perfectly receive and express the will of the audience, and the commonest populace is flattered by hearing its low mind returned to it with every ornament which happy talent can add. But if there be personality in the orator, the face of things changes. The audience is thrown into the attitude of pupil, follows like a child its preceptor, and hears what he has to say. It is as if, amidst the king's council at Madrid, Ximenes urged that an advantage might be gained of France, and

Mendoza that Flanders might be kept down, and Columbus, being introduced, was interrogated whether his geographical knowledge could aid the cabinet, and he can say nothing to one party or to the other, but he can show how all Europe can be diminished and reduced under the king, by annexing to Spain a continent as large as six or seven Europes.

This balance between the orator and the audience is expressed in what is called the pertinence of the speaker. There is always a rivalry between the orator and the occasion, between the demands of the hour and the prepossession of the individual. The emergency which has convened the meeting is usually of more importance than anything the debaters have in their minds, and therefore becomes imperative to them. But if one of them have anything of commanding necessity in his heart, how speedily he will find vent for it, and with the applause of the assembly! This balance is observed in the privatest intercourse. Poor Tom never knew the time when the present occurrence was so trivial that he could tell what was passing in his mind without being checked for unseasonable speech; but let Bacon speak, and wise men would

rather listen, though the revolution of kingdoms was on foot. I have heard it reported of an eloquent preacher, whose voice is not yet forgotten in this city, that, on occasions of death or tragic disaster, which overspread the congregation with gloom, he ascended the pulpit with more than his usual alacrity, and, turning to his favorite lessons of devout and jubilant thankfulness, — “Let us praise the Lord,” — carried audience, mourners, and mourning along with him, and swept away all the impertinence of private sorrow with his hosannas and songs of praise. Pepys says of Lord Clarendon (with whom “he is mad in love”), on his return from a conference, “I did never observe how much easier a man do speak when he knows all the company to be below him, than in him; for, though he spoke indeed excellent well, yet his manner and freedom of doing it, as if he played with it, and was informing only all the rest of the company, was mighty pretty.” *

This rivalry between the orator and the occasion is inevitable, and the occasion always yields to the eminence of the speaker; for a

* Diary, I. 169.

great man is the greatest of occasions. Of course, the interest of the audience and of the orator conspire. It is well with them only when his influence is complete; then only they are well pleased. Especially, he consults his power by making instead of taking his theme. If he should attempt to instruct the people in that which they already know, he would fail; but, by making them wise in that which he knows, he has the advantage of the assembly every moment. Napoleon's tactics of marching on the angle of an army, and always presenting a superiority of numbers, is the orator's secret also.

The several talents which the orator employs, the splendid weapons which went to the equipment of Demosthenes, of *Æschines*, of Demades the natural orator, of Fox, of Pitt, of Patrick Henry, of Adams, of Mirabeau, deserve a special enumeration. We must not quite omit to name the principal pieces.

The orator, as we have seen, must be a substantial personality. Then, first, he must have power of statement, — must have the fact, and know how to tell it. In any knot of men conversing on any subject, the person

who knows most about it will have the ear of the company, if he wishes it, and lead the conversation, — no matter what genius or distinction other men there present may have; and in any public assembly, him who has the facts, and can and will state them, people will listen to, though he is otherwise ignorant, though he is hoarse and ungraceful, though he stutters and screams.

In a court of justice, the audience are impartial; they really wish to sift the statements and know what the truth is. And in the examination of witnesses there usually leap out, quite unexpectedly, three or four stubborn words or phrases which are the pith and fate of the business, which sink into the ear of all parties, and stick there, and determine the cause. All the rest is repetition and qualifying; and the court and the county have really come together to arrive at these three or four memorable expressions, which betrayed the mind and meaning of somebody.

In every company, the man with the fact is like the guide you hire to lead your party up a mountain, or through a difficult country. He may not compare with any of the party in mind, or breeding, or courage, or possessions,

but he is much more important to the present need than any of them. That is what we go to the court-house for, — the statement of the fact, and the elimination of a general fact, the real relation of all the parties; and it is the certainty with which, indifferently in any affair that is well handled, the truth stares us in the face, through all the disguises that are put upon it, — a piece of the well-known human life, — that makes the interest of a court-room to the intelligent spectator.

I remember, long ago, being attracted by the distinction of the counsel, and the local importance of the cause, into the court-room. The prisoner's counsel were the strongest and cunningest lawyers in the Commonwealth. They drove the attorney for the State from corner to corner, taking his reasons from under him, and reducing him to silence, but not to submission. When hard pressed, he revenged himself, in his turn, on the judge, by requiring the court to define what salvage was. The court, thus pushed, tried words, and said everything it could think of to fill the time, supposing cases, and describing duties of insurers, captains, pilots, and miscellaneous sea-officers that are or might be, — like a school-

master puzzled by a hard sum, who reads the context with emphasis. But all this flood not serving the cuttle-fish to get away in, the horrible shark of the district-attorney being still there, grimly awaiting with his "The court must define," — the poor court pleaded its inferiority. The superior court must establish the law for this, and it read away piteously the decisions of the Supreme Court, but read to those who had no pity. The judge was forced at last to rule something, and the lawyers saved their rogue under the fog of a definition. The parts were so well cast and discriminated, that it was an interesting game to watch. The government was well enough represented. It was stupid, but it had a strong will and possession, and stood on that to the last. The judge had a task beyond his preparation, yet his position remained real: he was there to represent a great reality, — the justice of states, which we could well enough see beetling over his head, and which his trifling talk nowise affected, and did not impede, since he was entirely well-meaning.

The statement of the fact, however, sinks before the statement of the law, which requires immeasurably higher powers, and is a rarest

gift, being in all great masters one and the same thing, — in lawyers, nothing technical, but always some piece of common-sense, alike interesting to laymen as to clerks. Lord Mansfield's merit is the merit of common-sense. It is the same quality we admire in Aristotle, Montaigne, Cervantes, or in Samuel Johnson, or Franklin. Its application to law seems quite accidental. Each of Mansfield's famous decisions contains a level sentence or two, which hit the mark. His sentences are not always finished to the eye, but are finished to the mind. The sentences are involved, but a solid proposition is set forth, a true distinction is drawn. They come from and they go to the sound human understanding; and I read without surprise that the black-letter lawyers of the day sneered at his "equitable decisions," as if they were not also learned. This, indeed, is what speech is for, — to make the statement; and all that is called eloquence seems to me of little use, for the most part, to those who have it, but inestimable to such as have something to say.

Next to the knowledge of the fact and its law is method, which constitutes the genius and efficiency of all remarkable men. A crowd

of men go up to Faneuil Hall; they are all pretty well acquainted with the object of the meeting; they have all read the facts in the same newspapers. The orator possesses no information which his hearers have not; yet he teaches them to see the thing with his eyes. By the new placing, the circumstances acquire new solidity and worth. Every fact gains consequence by his naming it, and trifles become important. His expressions fix themselves in men's memories, and fly from mouth to mouth. His mind has some new principle of order. Where he looks, all things fly into their places. What will he say next? Let this man speak, and this man only. By applying the habits of a higher style of thought to the common affairs of this world, he introduces beauty and magnificence wherever he goes. Such a power was Burke's, and of this genius we have had some brilliant examples in our own political and legal men.

Imagery. The orator must be, to a certain extent, a poet. We are such imaginative creatures, that nothing so works on the human mind, barbarous or civil, as a trope. Condense some daily experience into a glowing symbol, and an audience is electrified. They

feel as if they already possessed some new right and power over a fact, which they can detach, and so completely master in thought. It is a wonderful aid to the memory, which carries away the image, and never loses it. A popular assembly, like the House of Commons, or the French Chamber, or the American Congress, is commanded by these two powers, — first by a fact, then by skill of statement. Put the argument into a concrete shape, into an image, — some hard phrase, round and solid as a ball, which they can see and handle and carry home with them, — and the cause is half won.

Statement, method, imagery, selection, tenacity of memory, power of dealing with facts, of illuminating them, of sinking them by ridicule or by diversion of the mind, rapid generalization, humor, pathos, are keys which the orator holds; and yet these fine gifts are not eloquence, and do often hinder a man's attainment of it. And if we come to the heart of the mystery, perhaps we should say that the truly eloquent man is a sane man with power to communicate his sanity. If you arm the man with the extraordinary weapons of this art, give him a grasp of facts,

learning, quick fancy, sarcasm, splendid allusion, interminable illustration, — all these talents, so potent and charming, have an equal power to ensnare and mislead the audience and the orator. His talents are too much for him, his horses run away with him; and people always perceive whether you drive, or whether the horses take the bits in their teeth and run. But these talents are quite something else when they are subordinated and serve him; and we go to Washington, or to Westminster Hall, or might well go round the world, to see a man who drives, and is not run away with, — a man who, in prosecuting great designs, has an absolute command of the means of representing his ideas, and uses them only to express these; placing facts, placing men; amid the inconceivable levity of human beings, never for an instant warped from his erectness. There is for every man a statement possible of that truth which he is most unwilling to receive, — a statement possible, so broad and so pungent that he cannot get away from it, but must either bend to it or die of it. Else there would be no such word as eloquence, which means this. The listener cannot hide from himself that something has been shown him

and the whole world, which he did not wish to see; and, as he cannot dispose of it, it disposes of him. The history of public men and affairs in America will readily furnish tragic examples of this fatal force.

For the triumphs of the art somewhat more must still be required, namely, a reinforcing of man from events, so as to give the double force of reason and destiny. In transcendent eloquence, there was ever some crisis in affairs, such as could deeply engage the man to the cause he pleads, and draw all this wide power to a point. For the explosions and eruptions, there must be accumulations of heat somewhere, beds of ignited anthracite at the centre. And in cases where profound conviction has been wrought, the eloquent man is he who is no beautiful speaker, but who is inwardly drunk with a certain belief. It agitates and tears him, and perhaps almost bereaves him of the power of articulation. Then it rushes from him as in short, abrupt screams, in torrents of meaning. The possession the subject has of his mind is so entire, that it insures an order of expression which is the order of Nature itself, and so the order of greatest force, and inimitable by any art. And the

main distinction between him and other well-graced actors is the conviction, communicated by every word, that his mind is contemplating a whole, and inflamed by the contemplation of the whole, and that the words and sentences uttered by him, however admirable, fall from him as unregarded parts of that terrible whole which he sees, and which he means that you shall see. And to this concentration a certain regnant calmness, which, in all the tumult, never utters a premature syllable, but keeps the secret of its means and method; and the orator stands before the people as a demoniacal power to whose miracles they have no key. This terrible earnestness makes good the ancient superstition of the hunter, that the bullet will hit its mark, which is first dipped in the marksman's blood.

Eloquence must be grounded on the plainest narrative. Afterwards, it may warm itself until it exhales symbols of every kind and color, speaks only through the most poetic forms; but, first and last, it must still be at bottom a biblical statement of fact. The orator is thereby an orator, that he keeps his feet ever on a fact. Thus only is he invincible. No gifts, no graces, no power of wit or

learning or illustration, will make any amends for want of this. All audiences are just to this point. Fame of voice or of rhetoric will carry people a few times to hear a speaker; but they soon begin to ask, "What is he driving at?" and if this man does not stand for anything, he will be deserted. A good upholder of anything which they believe, a fact-speaker of any kind, they will long follow; but a pause in the speaker's own character is very properly a loss of attraction. The preacher enumerates his classes of men, and I do not find my place therein; I suspect, then, that no man does. Everything is my cousin; and whilst he speaks things, I feel that he is touching some of my relations, and I am uneasy; but whilst he deals in words, we are released from attention. If you would lift me, you must be on higher ground. If you would liberate me, you must be free. If you would correct my false view of facts, — hold up to me the same facts in the true order of thought, and I cannot go back from the new conviction.

The power of Chatham, of Pericles, of Luther, rested on this strength of character, which, because it did not and could not fear anybody, made nothing of their antagonists,

and became sometimes exquisitely provoking and sometimes terrific to these.

We are slenderly furnished with anecdotes of these men, nor can we help ourselves by those heavy books in which their discourses are reported. Some of them were writers, like Burke; but most of them were not, and no record at all adequate to their fame remains. Besides, what is best is lost, — the fiery life of the moment. But the conditions for eloquence always exist. It is always dying out of famous places, and appearing in corners. Wherever the polarities meet, wherever the fresh moral sentiment, the instinct of freedom and duty, come in direct opposition to fossil conservatism and the thirst of gain, the spark will pass. The resistance to slavery in this country has been a fruitful nursery of orators. The natural connection by which it drew to itself a train of moral reforms, and the slight yet sufficient party organization it offered, reinforced the city with new blood from the woods and mountains. Wild men, John Baptists, Hermit Peters, John Knoxes, utter the savage sentiment of Nature in the heart of commercial capitals. They send us every year some piece of aboriginal strength, some tough

oak-stick of a man who is not to be silenced or insulted or intimidated by a mob, because he is more mob than they, — one who mobs the mob, — some sturdy countryman, on whom neither money, nor politeness, nor hard words, nor eggs, nor blows, nor brickbats, make any impression. He is fit to meet the bar-room wits and bullies; he is a wit and a bully himself, and something more: he is a graduate of the plough, and the stub-hoe, and the bushwhacker; knows all the secrets of swamp and snow-bank, and has nothing to learn of labor or poverty or the rough of farming. His hard head went through, in childhood, the drill of Calvinism, with text and mortification, so that he stands in the New England assembly a purer bit of New England than any, and flings his sarcasms right and left. He has not only the documents in his pocket to answer all cavils, and to prove all his positions, but he has the eternal reason in his head. This man scornfully renounces your civil organizations, — county, or city, or governor, or army, — is his own navy and artillery, judge and jury, legislature and executive. He has learned his lessons in a bitter school. Yet, if the pupil be of a texture to bear it, the best university

that can be recommended to a man of ideas is the gauntlet of the mobs.

He who will train himself to mastery in this science of persuasion must lay the emphasis of education, not on popular arts, but on character and insight. Let him see that his speech is not differenced from action; that, when he has spoken, he has not done nothing, nor done wrong, but has cleared his own skirts, has engaged himself to wholesome exertion. Let him look on opposition as opportunity. He cannot be defeated or put down. There is a principle of resurrection in him, an immortality of purpose. Men are averse and hostile, to give value to their suffrages. It is not the people that are in fault for not being convinced, but he that cannot convince them. He should mould them, armed as he is with the reason and love which are also the core of their nature. He is not to neutralize their opposition, but he is to convert them into fiery apostles and publishers of the same wisdom.

The highest platform of eloquence is the moral sentiment. It is what is called affirmative truth, and has the property of invigorating the hearer; and it conveys a hint of our eternity, when he feels himself addressed on

grounds which will remain when everything else is taken, and which have no trace of time or place or party. Everything hostile is stricken down in the presence of the sentiments; their majesty is felt by the most obdurate. It is observable that, as soon as one acts for large masses, the moral element will and must be allowed for, will and must work; and the men least accustomed to appeal to these sentiments invariably recall them when they address nations. Napoleon, even, must accept and use it as he can.

It is only to these simple strokes that the highest power belongs, — when a weak human hand touches, point by point, the eternal beams and rafters on which the whole structure of Nature and society is laid. In this tossing sea of delusion, we feel with our feet the adamant; in this dominion of chance, we find a principle of permanence. For I do not accept that definition of Isocrates, that the office of his art is, to make the great small and the small great; but I esteem this to be its perfection, — when the orator sees through all masks to the eternal scale of truth, in such sort that he can hold up before the eyes of men the fact of to-day steadily to that standard,

thereby making the great great, and the small small, which is the true way to astonish and to reform mankind.

All the chief orators of the world have been grave men, relying on this reality. One thought the philosophers of Demosthenes's own time found running through all his orations, — this namely, that "virtue secures its own success." "To stand on one's own feet" Heeren finds the key-note to the discourses of Demosthenes, as of Chatham.

Eloquence, like every other art, rests on laws the most exact and determinate. It is the best speech of the best soul. It may well stand as the exponent of all that is grand and immortal in the mind. If it do not so become an instrument, but aspires to be somewhat of itself, and to glitter for show, it is false and weak. In its right exercise, it is an elastic, unexhausted power, — who has sounded, who has estimated it? — expanding with the expansion of our interests and affections. Its great masters, whilst they valued every help to its attainment, and thought no pains too great which contributed in any manner to further it; — resembling the Arabian warrior of fame, who wore seventeen weapons

in his belt, and in personal combat used them all occasionally ; — yet subordinated all means ; never permitted any talent — neither voice, rhythm, poetic power, anecdote, sarcasm — to appear for show ; but were grave men, who preferred their integrity to their talent, and esteemed that object for which they toiled, whether the prosperity of their country, or the laws, or a reformation, or liberty of speech or of the press, or letters, or morals, as above the whole world, and themselves also.





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POWER.

HERE is not yet any inventory of a man's faculties, any more than a bible of his opinions. Who shall set a limit to the influence of a human being? There are men who, by their sympathetic attractions, carry nations with them, and lead the activity of the human race. And if there be such a tie, that, wherever the mind of man goes, nature will accompany him, perhaps there are men whose magnetisms are of that force to draw material and elemental powers, and, where they appear, immense instrumentalities organize around them. Life is a search after power; and this is an element with which the world is so saturated, — there is no chink or crevice in which it is not lodged, — that no honest seeking goes unrewarded. A man should prize

events and possessions as the ore in which this fine mineral is found; and he can well afford to let events and possessions, and the breath of the body go, if their value has been added to him in the shape of power. If he have secured the elixir, he can spare the wide gardens from which it was distilled. A cultivated man, wise to know and bold to perform, is the end to which nature works, and the education of the will is the flowering and result of all this geology and astronomy.

All successful men have agreed in one thing, — they were *causationists*. They believed that things went, not by luck, but by law; that there was not a weak or a cracked link in the chain that joins the first and last of things. A belief in causality, or strict connection between every trifle and the principle of being, and, in consequence, belief in compensation, or, that nothing is got for nothing, — characterizes all valuable minds, and must control every effort that is made by an industrious one. The most valiant men are the best believers in the tension of the laws. “All the great captains,” said Bonaparte, “have performed vast achievements by conforming with the rules of the art, — by adjusting efforts to obstacles.”

The key to the age may be this, or that, or the other, as the young orators describe ; — the key to all ages is — Imbecility ; imbecility in the vast majority of men, at all times, and, even in heroes, in all but certain eminent moments ; victims of gravity, custom, and fear. This gives force to the strong, — that the multitude have no habit of self-reliance or original action.

We must reckon success a constitutional trait. Courage, — the old physicians taught (and their meaning holds, if their physiology is a little mythical), — courage, or the degree of life, is as the degree of circulation of the blood in the arteries. “During passion, anger, fury, trials of strength, wrestling, fighting, a large amount of blood is collected in the arteries, the maintenance of bodily strength requiring it, and but little is sent into the veins. This condition is constant with intrepid persons.” Where the arteries hold their blood, is courage and adventure possible. Where they pour it unrestrained into the veins, the spirit is low and feeble. For performance of great mark, it needs extraordinary health. If Eric is in robust health, and has slept well, and is at the top of his

condition, and thirty years old, at his departure from Greenland, he will steer west, and his ships will reach Newfoundland. But take out Eric, and put in a stronger and bolder man, — Biorn, or Thorfin, — and the ships will, with just as much ease, sail six hundred, one thousand, fifteen hundred miles farther, and reach Labrador and New England. There is no chance in results. With adults, as with children, one class enter cordially into the game, and whirl with the whirling world; the others have cold hands, and remain bystanders; or are only dragged in by the humor and vivacity of those who can carry a dead-weight. The first wealth is health. Sickness is poor-spirited, and cannot serve any one: it must husband its resources to live. But health or fulness answers its own ends, and has to spare, runs over, and inundates the neighborhoods and creeks of other men's necessities.

All power is of one kind, a sharing of the nature of the world. The mind that is parallel with the laws of nature will be in the current of events, and strong with their strength. One man is made of the same stuff of which events are made; is in sympathy with the

course of things; can predict it. Whatever befalls, befalls him first; so that he is equal to whatever shall happen. A man who knows men, can talk well on politics, trade, law, war, religion. For, everywhere, men are led in the same manners.

The advantage of a strong pulse is not to be supplied by any labor, art, or concert. It is like the climate, which easily rears a crop, which no glass, or irrigation, or tillage, or manures, can elsewhere rival. It is like the opportunity of a city like New York, or Constantinople, which needs no diplomacy to force capital or genius or labor to it. They come of themselves, as the waters flow to it. So a broad; healthy, massive understanding seems to lie on the shore of unseen rivers, of unseen oceans, which are covered with barks, that, night and day, are drifted to this point. That is poured into its lap, which other men lie plotting for. It is in everybody's secret; anticipates everybody's discovery; and if it do not command every fact of the genius and the scholar, it is because it is large and sluggish, and does not think them worth the exertion which you do.

This affirmative force is in one, and is not

in another, as one horse has the spring in him, and another in the whip. "On the neck of the young man," said Hafiz, "sparkles no gem so gracious as enterprise." Import into any stationary district, as into an old Dutch population in New York or Pennsylvania, or among the planters of Virginia, a colony of hardy Yankees, with seething brains, heads full of steam-hammer, pulley, crank, and toothed wheel, — and everything begins to shine with values. What enhancement to all the water and land in England is the arrival of James Watt or Brunel! In every company, there is not only the active and passive sex, but, in both men and women, a deeper and more important *sex of mind*, namely, the inventive or creative class of both men and women, and the uninventive or accepting class. Each *plus* man represents his set, and, if he have the accidental advantage of personal ascendancy, — which implies neither more nor less of talent, but merely the temperamental or taming eye of a soldier or a schoolmaster (which one has, and one has not, as one has a black mustache and one a blond), — then quite easily, and without envy or resistance, all his coadjutors and feeders will admit his

right to absorb them. The merchant works by book-keeper and cashier; the lawyer's authorities are hunted up by clerks; the geologist reports the surveys of his subalterns; Commander Wilkes appropriates the results of all the naturalists attached to the Expedition; Thorwaldsen's statue is finished by stone-cutters; Dumas has journeymen; and Shakespeare was theatre-manager, and used the labor of many young men, as well as the playbooks.

There is always room for a man of force, and he makes room for many. Society is a troop of thinkers, and the best heads among them take the best places. A feeble man can see the farms that are fenced and tilled, the houses that are built. The strong man sees the possible houses and farms. His eye makes estates, as fast as the sun breeds clouds.

When a new boy comes into school, when a man travels, and encounters strangers every day, or, when into any old club a new-comer is domesticated, that happens which befalls when a strange ox is driven into a pen or pasture where cattle are kept; there is at once a trial of strength between the best pair of horns and the new-comer, and it is settled

thenceforth which is the leader. So now, there is a measuring of strength, very courteous, but decisive, and an acquiescence thenceforward when these two meet. Each reads his rate in the other's eyes. The weaker party finds that none of his information or wit quite fits the occasion. He thought he knew this or that: he finds that he omitted to learn the end of it. Nothing that he knows will quite hit the mark, whilst all the rival's arrows are good, and well thrown. But if he knew all the facts in the encyclopædia, it would not help him: for this is an affair of presence of mind, of attitude, of aplomb: the opponent has the sun and wind, and, in every cast, the choice of weapon and mark; and, when he himself is matched with some other antagonist, his own shafts fly well and hit. 'T is a question of stomach and constitution. The second man is as good as the first, — perhaps better; but has not stoutness or stomach, as the first has, and so his wit seems over-fine or under-fine.

Health is good, — power, life, that resists disease, poison, and all enemies, and is conservative, as well as creative. Here is question, every spring, whether to graft with wax,

or whether with clay; whether to whitewash or to potash, or to prune; but the one point is the thrifty tree. A good tree, that agrees with the soil, will grow in spite of blight, or bug, or pruning, or neglect, by night and by day, in all weathers and all treatments. Vivacity, leadership, must be had, and we are not allowed to be nice in choosing. We must fetch the pump with dirty water, if clean cannot be had. If we will make bread, we must have contagion, yeast, emptyings, or what not, to induce fermentation into the dough: as the torpid artist seeks inspiration at any cost, by virtue or by vice, by friend or by fiend, by prayer or by wine. And we have a certain instinct, that where is great amount of life, though gross and peccant, it has its own checks and purifications, and will be found at last in harmony with moral laws.

We watch in children, with pathetic interest, the degree in which they possess recuperative force. When they are hurt by us, or by each other, or go to the bottom of the class, or miss the annual prizes, or are beaten in the game, — if they lose heart, and remember the mischance in their chamber at home, they have a serious check. But if they have the buoy-

ancy and resistance that preoccupies them with new interest in the new moment, — the wounds cicatrize, and the fibre is the tougher for the hurt.

One comes to value this *plus* health, when he sees that all difficulties vanish before it. A timid man listening to the alarmists in Congress, and in the newspapers, and observing the profligacy of party, — sectional interests urged with a fury which shuts its eyes to consequences, with a mind made up to desperate extremities, ballot in one hand, and rifle in the other, — might easily believe that he and his country have seen their best days, and he hardens himself the best he can against the coming ruin. But, after this has been foretold with equal confidence fifty times, and government six per cents have not declined a quarter of a mill, he discovers that the enormous elements of strength which are here in play make our politics unimportant. Personal power, freedom, and the resources of nature strain every faculty of every citizen. We prosper with such vigor, that, like thrifty trees, which grow in spite of ice, lice, mice, and borers, so we do not suffer from the profligate swarms that fatten on the national

treasury. The huge animals nourish huge parasites, and the rancor of the disease attests the strength of the constitution. The same energy in the Greek *Demos* drew the remark, that the evils of popular government appear greater than they are; there is compensation for them in the spirit and energy it awakens. The rough-and-ready style which belongs to a people of sailors, foresters, farmers, and mechanics has its advantages. Power educates the potentate. (As long as our people quote English standards they dwarf their own proportions.) A Western lawyer of eminence said to me he wished it were a penal offence to bring an English law-book into a court in this country, so pernicious had he found in his experience our deference to English precedent. The very word "commerce" has only an English meaning, and is pinched to the cramp exigencies of English experience. The commerce of rivers, the commerce of railroads, and who knows but the commerce of air-balloons, must add an American extension to the pond-hole of admiralty. As long as our people quote English standards, they will miss the sovereignty of power; but let these rough riders, — legislators in shirt-sleeves, — Hoos-

ier, Sucker, Wolverine, Badger, — or whatever hard head Arkansas, Oregon, or Utah sends, half-orator, half-assassin, to represent its wrath and cupidity at Washington, — let these drive as they may; and the disposition of territories and public lands, the necessity of balancing and keeping at bay the snarling majorities of German, Irish, and of native millions, will bestow promptness, address, and reason, at last, on our buffalo-hunter, and authority and majesty of manners. The instinct of the people is right. Men expect from good whigs, put into office by the respectability of the country, much less skill to deal with Mexico, Spain, Britain, or with our own malcontent members, than from some strong transgressor, like Jefferson, or Jackson, who first conquers his own government, and then uses the same genius to conquer the foreigner. The senators who dissented from Mr. Polk's Mexican war were not those who knew better, but those who, from political position, could afford it; not Webster, but Benton and Calhoun.

This power, to be sure, is not clothed in satin. 'T is the power of Lynch law, of soldiers and pirates; and it bullies the peaceable

and loyal. But it brings its own antidote; and here is my point, — that all kinds of power usually emerge at the same time; good energy, and bad; power of mind, with physical health; the ecstasies of devotion, with the exasperations of debauchery. The same elements are always present, only sometimes these conspicuous, and sometimes those; what was yesterday foreground, being to-day background, — what was surface, playing now a not less effective part as basis. The longer the drought lasts, the more is the atmosphere surcharged with water. The faster the ball falls to the sun, the force to fly off is by so much augmented. And, in morals, wild liberty breeds iron conscience; natures with great impulses have great resources, and return from far. In politics, the sons of democrats will be whigs; whilst red republicanism, in the father, is a spasm of nature to engender an intolerable tyrant in the next age. On the other hand, conservatism, ever more timorous and narrow, disgusts the children, and drives them for a mouthful of fresh air into radicalism.

Those who have most of this coarse energy, — the “bruisers,” who have run the gantlet

of caucus and tavern through the county or the State,—have their own vices, but they have the good-nature of strength and courage. Fierce and unscrupulous, they are usually frank and direct, and above falsehood. Our politics fall into bad hands, and churchmen and men of refinement, it seems agreed, are not fit persons to send to Congress. Politics is a deleterious profession, like some poisonous handicrafts. Men in power have no opinions, but may be had cheap for any opinion, for any purpose; and if it be only a question between the most civil and the most forcible, I lean to the last. These Hoosiers and Suckers are really better than the snivelling opposition. Their wrath is at least of a bold and manly cast. They see, against the unanimous declarations of the people, how much crime the people will bear; they proceed from step to step, and they have calculated but too justly upon their Excellencies, the New England governors, and upon their Honors, the New England legislators. The messages of the governors and the resolutions of the legislatures are a proverb for expressing a sham virtuous indignation, which, in the course of events, is sure to be belied.

In trade, also, this energy usually carries a trace of ferocity. Philanthropic and religious bodies do not commonly make their executive officers out of saints. The communities hitherto founded by Socialists — the Jesuits, the Port-Royalists, the American communities at New Harmony, at Brook Farm, at Zoar — are only possible, by installing Judas as steward. The rest of the offices may be filled by good burgesses. The pious and charitable proprietor has a foreman not quite so pious and charitable. The most amiable of country gentlemen has a certain pleasure in the teeth of the bull-dog which guards his orchard. Of the Shaker society, it was formerly a sort of proverb in the country, that they always sent the devil to market. And in representations of the Deity, painting, poetry, and popular religion have ever drawn the wrath from Hell. It is an esoteric doctrine of society, that a little wickedness is good to make muscle; as if conscience were not good for hands and legs, as if poor decayed formalists of law and order cannot run like wild goats, wolves, and conies; that, as there is a use in medicine for poisons, so the world cannot move without rogues; that pub-

lic spirit and the ready hand are as well found among the malignants. 'T is not very rare, the coincidence of sharp private and political practice, with public spirit, and good neighborhood.

I knew a burly Boniface who for many years kept a public-house in one of our rural capitals. He was a knave whom the town could ill spare. He was a social, vascular creature, grasping and selfish. There was no crime which he did not or could not commit. But he made good friends of the selectmen, served them with his best chop, when they supped at his house, and also with his honor the Judge, he was very cordial, grasping his hand. He introduced all the fiends, male and female, into the town, and united in his person the functions of bully, incendiary, swindler, barkeeper, and burglar. He girdled the trees, and cut off the horses' tails of the temperance people, in the night. He led the "rummies" and radicals in town-meeting with a speech. Meantime, he was civil, fat, and easy, in his house, and precisely the most public-spirited citizen. He was active in getting the roads repaired and planted with shade-trees; he subscribed for the fountains, the gas, and the telegraph; he introduced the new horse-rake, the new scraper,

the baby-jumper, and what not, that Connecticut sends to the admiring citizens. He did this the easier, that the pedler stopped at his house, and paid his keeping, by setting up his new trap on the landlord's premises.

Whilst thus the energy for originating and executing work deforms itself by excess, and so our axe chops off our own fingers, — this evil is not without remedy. All the elements whose aid man calls in will sometimes become his masters, especially those of most subtle force. Shall he, then, renounce steam, fire, and electricity, or shall he learn to deal with them? The rule for this whole class of agencies is, — all *plus* is good; only put it in the right place.

Men of this surcharge of arterial blood cannot live on nuts, herb-tea, and elegies; cannot read novels, and play whist; cannot satisfy all their wants at the Thursday Lecture, or the Boston Athenæum. They pine for adventure, and must go to Pike's Peak; had rather die by the hatchet of a Pawnee, than sit all day and every day at a counting-room desk. They are made for war, for the sea, for mining, hunting, and clearing; for hair-breadth adventures, huge risks, and the joy of eventful living. Some

men cannot endure an hour of calm at sea. I remember a poor Malay cook, on board a Liverpool packet, who, when the wind blew a gale, could not contain his joy. "Blow!" he cried; "me do tell you, blow!" Their friends and governors must see that some vent for their explosive complexion is provided. The roisters who are destined for infamy at home, if sent to Mexico, will "cover you with glory," and come back heroes and generals. There are Oregons, Californias, and Exploring Expeditions enough appertaining to America to find them in files to gnaw and in crocodiles to eat. The young English are fine animals, full of blood, and when they have no wars to breathe their riotous valors in, they seek for travels as dangerous as war, diving into Maelstroms; swimming Hellesponts; wading up the snowy Himmaleh; hunting lion, rhinoceros, elephant, in South Africa; gypsying with Borrow in Spain and Algiers; riding alligators in South America with Waterton; utilizing Bedouin, Sheik, and Pacha, with Layard; yachting among the icebergs of Lancaster Sound; peeping into craters on the equator; or running on the creases of Malays in Borneo.

The excess of virility has the same importance in general history as in private and industrial life. Strong race or strong individual rests at last on natural forces, which are best in the savage, who, like the beasts around him, is still in reception of the milk from the teats of Nature. Cut off the connection between any of our works, and this aboriginal source, and the work is shallow. The people lean on this, and the mob is not quite so bad an argument as we sometimes say, for it has this good side. "March without the people," said a French deputy from the tribune, "and you march into night: their instincts are a finger-pointing of Providence, always turned toward real benefit. But when you espouse an Orleans party, or a Bourbon, or a Montalembert party, or any other but an organic party, though you mean well, you have a personality instead of a principle, which will inevitably drag you into a corner."

The best anecdotes of this force are to be had from savage life, in explorers, soldiers, and buccaneers. But who cares for fallings-out of assassins, and fights of bears, or grindings of icebergs? Physical force has no value, where there is nothing else. Snow in snow-

banks, fire in volcanoes and solfataras is cheap. The luxury of ice is in tropical countries and midsummer days. The luxury of fire is to have a little on our hearth; and of electricity, not volleys of the charged cloud, but the manageable stream on the battery-wires. So of spirit, or energy; the rests or remains of it, in the civil and moral man, are worth all the cannibals in the Pacific.

In history, the great moment is, when the savage is just ceasing to be a savage, with all his hairy Pelasgic strength directed on his opening sense of beauty:—and you have Pericles and Phidias,—not yet passed over into the Corinthian civility. Everything good in nature and the world is in that moment of transition, when the swarthy juices still flow plentifully from nature, but their astringency or acidity is got out by ethics and humanity.

The triumphs of peace have been in some proximity to war. Whilst the hand was still familiar with the sword-hilt, whilst the habits of the camp were still visible in the port and complexion of the gentleman, his intellectual power culminated: the compression and tension of these stern conditions is a training for the finest and softest arts, and can rarely be

compensated in tranquil times, except by some analogous vigor drawn from occupations as hardy as war.

We say that success is constitutional; depends on a *plus* condition of mind and body, on power of work, on courage; that it is of main efficacy in carrying on the world, and, though rarely found in the right state for an article of commerce, but oftener in the super-saturate or excess, which makes it dangerous and destructive, yet it cannot be spared, and must be had in that form, and absorbents provided to take off its edge.

The affirmative class monopolize the homage of mankind. They originate and execute all the great feats. What a force was coiled up in the skull of Napoleon! Of the sixty thousand men making his army at Eylau, it seems some thirty thousand were thieves and burglars. The men whom, in peaceful communities, we hold if we can, with iron at their legs, in prisons, under the muskets of sentinels, this man dealt with, hand to hand, dragged them to their duty, and won his victories by their bayonets.

This aboriginal might gives a surprising pleasure when it appears under conditions of

supreme refinement, as in the proficient in high art. When Michael Angelo was forced to paint the Sistine Chapel in fresco, of which art he knew nothing, he went down into the Pope's gardens behind the Vatican, and with a shovel dug out ochres, red and yellow, mixed them with glue and water with his own hands, and having, after many trials, at last suited himself, climbed his ladders, and painted away, week after week, month after month, the sibyls and prophets. He surpassed his successors in rough vigor, as much as in purity of intellect and refinement. He was not crushed by his one picture left unfinished at last. Michael was wont to draw his figures first in skeleton, then to clothe them with flesh, and lastly to drape them. "Ah!" said a brave painter to me, thinking on these things, "if a man has failed, you will find he has dreamed instead of working. There is no way to success in our art, but to take off your coat, grind paint, and work like a digger on the railroad, all day and every day."

Success goes thus invariably with a certain *plus* or positive power; an ounce of power must balance an ounce of weight. And, though a man cannot return into his mother's

womb, and be born with new amounts of vivacity, yet there are two economies, which are the best *succedanea* which the case admits. The first is, the stopping off decisively our miscellaneous activity, and concentrating our force on one or a few points; as the gardener, by severe pruning, forces the sap of the tree into one or two vigorous limbs, instead of suffering it to spindle into a sheaf of twigs.

“Enlarge not thy destiny,” said the oracle; “endeavor not to do more than is given thee in charge.” The one prudence in life is concentration; the one evil is dissipation: and it makes no difference whether our dissipations are coarse or fine; property and its cares, friends, and a social habit, or politics, or music, or feasting. Everything is good which takes away one plaything and delusion more, and drives us home to add one stroke of faithful work. Friends, books, pictures, lower duties, talents, flatteries, hopes, — all are distractions which cause oscillations in our giddy balloon, and make a good poise and a straight course impossible. You must elect your work; you shall take what your brain can, and drop all the rest. Only so can that amount of vital force accumulate

which can make the step from knowing to doing. No matter how much faculty of idle seeing a man has, the step from knowing to doing is rarely taken. 'Tis a step out of a chalk circle of imbecility into fruitfulness. Many an artist lacking this, lacks all: he sees the masculine Angelo or Cellini with despair. He, too, is up to Nature and the First Cause in his thought. But the spasm to collect and swing his whole being into one act, he has not. The poet Campbell said, that "a man accustomed to work was equal to any achievement he resolved on, and that, for himself, necessity, not inspiration, was the prompter of his muse."

Concentration is the secret of strength in politics, in war, in trade, in short, in all management of human affairs. One of the high anecdotes of the world is the reply of Newton to the inquiry, "how he had been able to achieve his discoveries?" — "By always intending my mind." Or if you will have a text from politics, take this from Plutarch: "There was, in the whole city, but one street in which Pericles was ever seen, the street which led to the market-place and the council-house. He declined all invitations to

banquets, and all gay assemblies and company. During the whole period of his administration, he never dined at the table of a friend." Or if we seek an example from trade, — "I hope," said a good man to Rothschild, "your children are not too fond of money and business: I am sure you would not wish that." — "I am sure I should wish that: I wish them to give mind, soul, heart, and body to business, — that is the way to be happy. It requires a great deal of boldness and a great deal of caution to make a great fortune, and when you have got it, it requires ten times as much wit to keep it. If I were to listen to all the projects proposed to me, I should ruin myself very soon. Stick to one business, young man. Stick to your brewery (he said this to young Buxton), and you will be the great brewer of London. Be brewer, and banker, and merchant, and manufacturer, and you will soon be in the Gazette."

Many men are knowing, many are apprehensive and tenacious, but they do not rush to a decision. But in our flowing affairs a decision must be made, — the best, if you can; but any is better than none. There are twenty ways of going to a point, and one is the short-

est; but set out at once on one. A man who has that presence of mind which can bring to him on the instant all he knows, is worth for action a dozen men who know as much, but can only bring it to light slowly. The good Speaker in the House is not the man who knows the theory of parliamentary tactics, but the man who decides off-hand. The good judge is not he who does hair-splitting justice to every allegation, but who, aiming at substantial justice, rules something intelligible for the guidance of suitors. The good lawyer is not the man who has an eye to every side and angle of contingency, and qualifies all his qualifications, but who throws himself on your part so heartily, that he can get you out of a scrape. Dr. Johnson said, in one of his flowing sentences, "Miserable beyond all names of wretchedness is that unhappy pair, who are doomed to reduce beforehand to the principles of abstract reason all the details of each domestic day. There are cases where little can be said, and much must be done."

The second substitute for temperament is drill, the power of use and routine. The hack is a better roadster than the Arab barb. In chemistry, the galvanic stream, slow but

continuous, is equal in power to the electric spark, and is, in our arts, a better agent. So in human action, against the spasm of energy, we offset the continuity of drill. We spread the same amount of force over much time, instead of condensing it into a moment. 'T is the same ounce of gold here in a ball, and there in a leaf. At West Point, Colonel Buford, the chief engineer, pounded with a hammer on the trunnions of a cannon, until he broke them off. He fired a piece of ordnance some hundred times in swift succession, until it burst. Now which stroke broke the trunnion? Every stroke. Which blast burst the piece? Every blast. "*Diligence passe sens*," Henry VIII. was wont to say, or, great is drill. John Kemble said, that the worst provincial company of actors would go through a play better than the best amateur company. Basil Hall likes to show that the worst regular troops will beat the best volunteers. Practice is nine tenths. A course of mobs is good practice for orators. All the great speakers were bad speakers at first. Stumping it through England for seven years, made Cobden a consummate debater. Stumping it through New England for twice seven, trained

Wendell Phillips. The way to learn German is, to read the same dozen pages over and over a hundred times, till you know every word and particle in them, and can pronounce and repeat them by heart. No genius can recite a ballad at first reading, so well as mediocrity can at the fifteenth or twentieth reading. The rule for hospitality and Irish "help" is, to have the same dinner every day throughout the year. At last, Mrs. O'Shaughnessy learns to cook it to a nicety, the host learns to carve it, and the guests are well served. A humorous friend of mine thinks, that the reason why Nature is so perfect in her art, and gets up such inconceivably fine sunsets, is, that she has learned how, at last, by dint of doing the same thing so very often. Cannot one converse better on a topic on which he has experience, than on one which is new? Men whose opinion is valued on 'Change are only such as have a special experience, and off that ground their opinion is not valuable. "More are made good by exercitation than by nature," said Democritus. The friction in nature is so enormous that we cannot spare any power. It is not question to express our thought, to elect our way, but

to overcome resistances of the medium and material in everything we do. Hence the use of drill, and the worthlessness of amateurs to cope with practitioners. Six hours every day at the piano, only to give facility of touch; six hours a day at painting, only to give command of the odious materials, oil, ochres, and brushes. The masters say, that they know a master in music, only by seeing the pose of the hands on the keys; — so difficult and vital an act is the command of the instrument. To have learned the use of the tools, by thousands of manipulations; to have learned the arts of reckoning, by endless adding and dividing, is the power of the mechanic and the clerk.

I remarked in England, in confirmation of a frequent experience at home, that, in literary circles, the men of trust and consideration, bookmakers, editors, university deans and professors, bishops, too, were by no means men of the largest literary talent, but usually of a low and ordinary intellectuality, with a sort of mercantile activity and working talent. Indifferent hacks and mediocrities tower by pushing their forces to a lucrative point, or by working power, over multitudes of superior men, in Old as in New England.

I have not forgotten that there are sublime considerations which limit the value of talent and superficial success. We can easily over-praise the vulgar hero. There are sources on which we have not drawn. I know what I abstain from. I adjourn what I have to say on this topic to the essays on Culture and Worship. But this force or spirit, being the means relied on by Nature for bringing the work of the day about, — as far as we attach importance to household life, and the prizes of the world, we must respect that. And I hold, that an economy may be applied to it; it is as much a subject of exact law and arithmetic as fluids and gases are; it may be husbanded, or wasted: every man is efficient only as he is a container or vessel of this force, and never was any signal act or achievement in history, but by this expenditure. This is not gold, but the gold-maker; not the fame, but the exploit.

If these forces and this husbandry are within reach of our will, and the laws of them can be read, we infer that all success, and all conceivable benefit for man, is also, first or last, within his reach, and has its own sublime economies by which it may be attained. The

world is mathematical, and has no casualty, in all its vast and flowing curve. Success has no more eccentricity, than the gingham and muslin we weave in our mills. I know no more affecting lesson to our busy, plotting New England brains, than to go into one of the factories with which we have lined all the watercourses in the States. A man hardly knows how much he is a machine, until he begins to make telegraph, loom, press, and locomotive, in his own image. But in these, he is forced to leave out his follies and hindrances, so that when we go to the mill, the machine is more moral than we. Let a man dare go to a loom, and see if he be equal to it. Let machine confront machine, and see how they come out. The world-mill is more complex than the calico-mill, and the architect stooped less. In the gingham-mill, a broken thread or a shred spoils the web through a piece of a hundred yards, and is traced back to the girl that wove it, and lessens her wages. The stockholder, on being shown this, rubs his hands with delight. Are you so cunning, Mr. Profitloss, and do you expect to swindle your master and employer, in the web you weave? A day is a more magnificent cloth than any muslin, the mechanism that makes it

is infinitely cunninger, and you shall not conceal the sleazy, fraudulent, rotten hours you have slipped into the piece, nor fear that any honest thread, or straighter steel, or more inflexible shaft, will not testify in the web.





WEALTH.

Who shall tell what did befall,
Far away in time, when once,
Over the lifeless ball,
Hung idle stars and suns?
What god the element obeyed?
Wings of what wind the lichen bore,
Wafting the puny seeds of power,
Which, lodged in rock, the rock abrade?
And well the primal pioneer
Knew the strong task to it assigned
Patient through Heaven's enormous year
To build in matter home for mind.
From air the creeping centuries drew
The matted thicket low and wide,
This must the leaves of ages strew
The granite slab to clothe and hide,
Ere wheat can wave its golden pride.
What smiths, and in what furnace, rolled
(In dizzy æons dim and mute
The reeling brain can ill compute)
Copper and iron, lead and gold?
What oldest star the fame can save
Of races perishing to pave

The planet with a floor of lime?
Dust is their pyramid and mole:
Who saw what ferns and palms were pressed
Under the tumbling mountain's breast,
In the safe herbal of the coal?
But when the quarried means were piled,
All is waste and worthless, till
Arrives the wise selecting will,
And, out of slime and chaos, Wit
Draws the threads of fair and fit.
Then temples rose, and towns, and marts,
The shop of toil, the hall of arts;
Then flew the sail across the seas
To feed the North from tropic trees;
The storm-wind wave, the torrent span,
Where they were bid the rivers ran;
New slaves fulfilled the poet's dream,
Galvanic wire, strong-shouldered steam.
Then docks were built, and crops were stored,
And ingots added to the hoard.
But, though light-headed man forget,
Remembering Matter pays her debt:
Still, through her motes and masses, draw
Electric thrills and ties of Law,
Which bind the strength of Nature wild
To the conscience of a child.





WEALTH.

AS soon as a stranger is introduced into any company, one of the first questions which all wish to have answered, is, How does that man get his living? And with reason. He is no whole man until he knows how to earn a blameless livelihood. Society is barbarous, until every industrious man can get his living without dishonest customs.

Every man is a consumer, and ought to be a producer. He fails to make his place good in the world, unless he not only pays his debt, but also adds something to the common wealth. Nor can he do justice to his genius, without making some larger demand on the world than a bare subsistence. He is by constitution expensive, and needs to be rich.

Wealth has its source in applications of the

mind to nature, from the rudest strokes of spade and axe, up to the last secrets of art. Intimate ties subsist between thought and all production; because a better order is equivalent to vast amounts of brute labor. The forces and the resistances are Nature's, but the mind acts in bringing things from where they abound to where they are wanted; in wise combining; in directing the practice of the useful arts, and in the creation of finer values, by fine art, by eloquence, by song, or the reproductions of memory. Wealth is in applications of mind to nature, and the art of getting rich consists not in industry, much less in saving, but in a better order, in timeliness, in being at the right spot. One man has stronger arms, or longer legs; another sees by the course of streams, and growth of markets, where land will be wanted, makes a clearing to the river, goes to sleep, and wakes up rich. Steam is no stronger now, than it was a hundred years ago; but is put to better use. A clever fellow was acquainted with the expansive force of steam; he also saw the wealth of wheat and grass rotting in Michigan. Then he cunningly screws on the steam-pipe to the wheat-crop. Puff now, O Steam! The

steam puffs and expands as before, but this time it is dragging all Michigan at its back to hungry New York and hungry England. Coal lay in ledges under the ground since the Flood, until a laborer with pick and windlass brings it to the surface. We may well call it black diamonds. Every basket is power and civilization. For coal is a portable climate. It carries the heat of the tropics to Labrador and the polar circle; and it is the means of transporting itself whithersoever it is wanted. Watt and Stephenson whispered in the ear of mankind their secret, that *a half-ounce of coal will draw two tons a mile*, and coal carries coal, by rail and by boat, to make Canada as warm as Calcutta, and with its comfort brings its industrial power.

When the farmer's peaches are taken from under the tree, and carried into town, they have a new look, and a hundred-fold value over the fruit which grew on the same bough, and lies fulsomely on the ground. The craft of the merchant is this bringing a thing from where it abounds, to where it is costly.

Wealth begins in a tight roof that keeps the rain and wind out; in a good pump that yields you plenty of sweet water; in two suits of

clothes, so to change your dress when you are wet; in dry sticks to burn; in a good double-wick lamp; and three meals; in a horse, or a locomotive, to cross the land; in a boat to cross the sea; in tools to work with; in books to read; and so, in giving, on all sides, by tools and auxiliaries, the greatest possible extension to our powers, as if it added feet, and hands, and eyes, and blood, length to the day, and knowledge, and goodwill.

Wealth begins with these articles of necessity. And here we must recite the iron law which Nature thunders in these northern climates. First, she requires that each man should feed himself. If, happily, his fathers have left him no inheritance, he must go to work, and by making his wants less, or his gains more, he must draw himself out of that state of pain and insult in which she forces the beggar to lie. She gives him no rest until this is done; she starves, taunts, and torments him, takes away warmth, laughter, sleep, friends, and daylight, until he has fought his way to his own loaf. Then, less peremptorily, but still with sting enough, she urges him to the acquisition of such things as belong

to him. Every warehouse and shop-window, every fruit-tree, every thought of every hour, opens a new want to him, which it concerns his power and dignity to gratify. It is of no use to argue the wants down: the philosophers have laid the greatness of man in making his wants few; but will a man content himself with a hut and a handful of dried pease? He is born to be rich. He is thoroughly related; and is tempted out by his appetites and fancies to the conquest of this and that piece of nature, until he finds his well-being in the use of his planet, and of more planets than his own. Wealth requires, besides the crust of bread and the roof, — the freedom of the city, the freedom of the earth, travelling, machinery, the benefits of science, music, and fine arts, the best culture, and the best company. He is 'the rich man who can avail himself of all men's faculties. He is the richest man who knows how to draw a benefit from the labors of the greatest number of men, of men in distant countries, and in past times. The same correspondence that is between thirst in the stomach, and water in the spring, exists between the whole of man and the whole of nature. The elements offer their

service to him. The sea, washing the equator and the poles, offers its perilous aid, and the power and empire that follow it, — day by day to his craft and audacity. “Beware of me,” it says, “but if you can hold me; I am the key to all the lands.” Fire offers, on its side, an equal power. Fire, steam, lightning, gravity, ledges of rock, mines of iron, lead, quicksilver, tin, and gold; forests of all woods; fruits of all climates; animals of all habits; the powers of tillage; the fabrics of his chemic laboratory; the webs of his loom; the masculine draught of his locomotive, the talismans of the machine-shop; all grand and subtile things, minerals, gases, ethers, passions, war, trade, government, are his natural playmates, and, according to the excellence of the machinery in each human being, is his attraction for the instruments he is to employ. The world is his tool-chest, and he is successful, or his education is carried on just so far, as is the marriage of his faculties with nature, or, the degree in which he takes up things into himself.

The strong race is strong on these terms. The Saxons are the merchants of the world; now, for a thousand years, the leading race,

and by nothing more than their quality of personal independence, and, in its special modification, pecuniary independence. No reliance for bread and games on the government, no clanship, no patriarchal style of living by the revenues of a chief, no marrying-on, — no system of clientship suits them; but every man must pay his scot. The English are prosperous and peaceable, with their habit of considering that every man must take care of himself, and has himself to thank, if he do not maintain and improve his position in society.

The subject of economy mixes itself with morals, inasmuch as it is a peremptory point of virtue that a man's independence be secured. Poverty demoralizes. A man in debt is so far a slave; and Wall Street thinks it easy for a *millionnaire* to be a man of his word, a man of honor, but, that, in failing circumstances, no man can be relied on to keep his integrity. And when one observes in the hotels and palaces of our Atlantic capitals, the habit of expense, the riot of the senses, the absence of bonds, clanship, fellow-feeling of any kind, he feels, that, when a man or a woman is driven to the wall, the chances of integrity are fright-

fully diminished, as if virtue were coming to be a luxury which few could afford, or, as Burke said, "at a market almost too high for humanity." He may fix his inventory of necessities and of enjoyments on what scale he pleases, but if he wishes the power and privilege of thought, the chalking out his own career, and having society on his own terms, he must bring his wants within his proper power to satisfy.

The manly part is to do with might and main what you can do. The world is full of fops who never did anything, and who have persuaded beauties and men of genius to wear their fop livery, and these will deliver the fop opinion, that it is not respectable to be seen earning a living; that it is much more respectable to spend without earning; and this doctrine of the snake will come also from the elect sons of light; for wise men are not wise at all hours, and will speak five times from their taste or their humor, to once from their reason.) The brave workman, who might betray his feeling of it in his manners, if he do not succumb in his practice, must replace the grace or elegance forfeited, by the merit of the work done. No matter whether he make

shoes, or statues, or laws. It is the privilege of any human work which is well done to invest the doer with a certain haughtiness. He can well afford not to conciliate, whose faithful work will answer for him. The mechanic at his bench carries a quiet heart and assured manners, and deals on even terms with men of any condition. The artist has made his picture so true, that it disconcerts criticism. The statue is so beautiful, that it contracts no stain from the market, but makes the market a silent gallery for itself. The case of the young lawyer was pitiful to disgust, — a paltry matter of buttons or tweezer-cases; but the determined youth saw in it an aperture to insert his dangerous wedges, made the insignificance of the thing forgotten, and gave fame by his sense and energy to the name and affairs of the Tittleton snuff-box factory.

Society in large towns is babyish, and wealth is made a toy. The life of pleasure is so ostentatious, that a shallow observer must believe that this is the agreed best use of wealth, and, whatever is pretended, it ends in cossetting. But, if this were the main use of surplus capital, it would bring us to barricades, burned towns, and tomahawks, presently. Men of

sense esteem wealth to be the assimilation of nature to themselves, the converting of the sap and juices of the planet to the incarnation and nutriment of their design. Power is what they want, — not candy; — power to execute their design, power to give legs and feet, form and actuality to their thought, which, to a clear-sighted man, appears the end for which the Universe exists, and all its resources might be well applied. Columbus thinks that the sphere is a problem for practical navigation, as well as for closet geometry, and looks on all kings and peoples as cowardly landmen, until they dare fit him out. Few men on the planet have more truly belonged to it. But he was forced to leave much of his map blank. His successors inherited his map, and inherited his fury to complete it.

So the men of the mine, telegraph, mill, map, and survey, — the monomaniacs, who talk up their project in marts, and offices, and entreat men to subscribe: — how did our factories get built? how did North America get netted with iron rails, except by the importunity of these orators, who dragged all the prudent men in? Is party the madness of many for the gain of a few? This *speculative*

genius is the madness of few for the gain of the world. The projectors are sacrificed, but the public is the gainer. Each of these idealists, working after his thought, would make it tyrannical, if he could. He is met and antagonized by other speculators, as hot as he. The equilibrium is preserved by these counteractions, as one tree keeps down another in the forest, that it may not absorb all the sap in the ground. And the supply in nature of railroad presidents, copper-miners, grand-junctioners, smoke-burners, fire-annihilators, etc., is limited by the same law which keeps the proportion in the supply of carbon, of alum, and of hydrogen.

To be rich is to have a ticket of admission to the master-works and chief men of each race. It is to have the sea, by voyaging; to visit the mountains, Niagara, the Nile, the desert, Rome, Paris, Constantinople; to see galleries, libraries, arsenals, manufactories. The reader of Humboldt's "Cosmos" follows the marches of a man whose eyes, ears, and mind are armed by all the science, arts, and implements which mankind have anywhere accumulated, and who is using these to add to the stock. So is it with Denon,

Beckford, Belzoni, Wilkinson, Layard, Kane, Lepsius, and Livingston. "The rich man," says Saadi, "is everywhere expected and at home." The rich take up something more of the world into man's life. They include the country as well as the town, the ocean-side, the White Hills, the Far West, and the old European homesteads of man, in their notion of available material. The world is his, who has money to go over it. He arrives at the sea-shore, and a sumptuous ship has floored and carpeted for him the stormy Atlantic, and made it a luxurious hotel, amid the horrors of tempests. The Persians say, "'T is the same to him who wears a shoe, as if the whole earth were covered with leather."

Kings are said to have long arms, but every man should have long arms, and should pluck his living, his instruments, his power, and his knowing, from the sun, moon, and stars. Is not then the demand to be rich legitimate? Yet, I have never seen a rich man. I have never seen a man as rich as all men ought to be, or, with an adequate command of nature. The pulpit and the press have many common-places denouncing the thirst for wealth; but if men should take these moralists at their

word, and leave off aiming to be rich, the moralists would rush to rekindle at all hazards this love of power in the people, lest civilization should be undone. Men are urged by their ideas to acquire the command over nature. Ages derive a culture from the wealth of Roman Cæsars, Leo Tenth, magnificent Kings of France, Grand Dukes of Tuscany, Dukes of Devonshire, Townleys, Vernons, and Peels, in England; or whatever great proprietors. It is the interest of all men, that there should be Vaticans and Louvres full of noble works of art; British Museums, and French Gardens of Plants, Philadelphia Academies of Natural History, Bodleian, Ambrosian, Royal, Congressional Libraries. It is the interest of all that there should be Exploring Expeditions; Captain Cooks to voyage round the world, Rosses, Franklins, Richardsons, and Kanes, to find the magnetic and the geographic poles. We are all richer for the measurement of a degree of latitude on the earth's surface. Our navigation is safer for the chart. How intimately our knowledge of the system of the Universe rests on that!—and a true economy in a state or an individual will forget its frugality in behalf of claims like these.

Whilst it is each man's interest, that, not only ease and convenience of living, but also wealth or surplus product should exist somewhere, it need not be in his hands. Often it is very undesirable to him. Goethe said well, "Nobody should be rich but those who understand it." Some men are born to own, and can animate all their possessions. Others cannot: their owning is not graceful; seems to be a compromise of their character: they seem to steal their own dividends. They should own who can administer; not they who hoard and conceal; not they who, the greater proprietors they are, are only the greater beggars, but they whose work carves out work for more, opens a path for all. For he is the rich man in whom the people are rich, and he is the poor man in whom the people are poor: and how to give all access to the masterpieces of art and nature, is the problem of civilization. The socialism of our day has done good service in setting men on thinking how certain civilizing benefits, now only enjoyed by the opulent, can be enjoyed by all. For example, the providing to each man the means and apparatus of science, and of the arts. There are many articles good

for occasional use, which few men are able to own. Every man wishes to see the ring of Saturn, the satellites and belts of Jupiter and Mars; the mountains and craters in the moon: yet how few can buy a telescope! and of those, scarcely one would like the trouble of keeping it in order, and exhibiting it. So of electrical and chemical apparatus, and many the like things. Every man may have occasion to consult books which he does not care to possess, such as cyclopædias, dictionaries, tables, charts, maps, and public documents: pictures also of birds, beasts, fishes, shells, trees, flowers, whose names he desires to know.

There is a refining influence from the arts of Design on a prepared mind, which is as positive as that of music, and not to be supplied from any other source. But pictures, engravings, statues, and casts, beside their first cost, entail expenses, as of galleries and keepers for the exhibition; and the use which any man can make of them is rare, and their value, too, is much enhanced by the numbers of men who can share their enjoyment. In the Greek cities, it was reckoned profane, that any person should pretend a property in a

work of art, which belonged to all who could behold it. I think sometimes, — could I only have music on my own terms; — could I live in a great city, and know where I could go whenever I wished the ablution and inundation of musical waves, — that were a bath and a medicine.

If properties of this kind were owned by states, towns, and lyceums, they would draw the bonds of neighborhood closer. A town would exist to an intellectual purpose. In Europe, where the feudal forms secure the permanence of wealth in certain families, those families buy and preserve these things, and lay them open to the public. But in America, where democratic institutions divide every estate into small portions, after a few years, the public should step into the place of these proprietors, and provide this culture and inspiration for the citizen.

Man was born to be rich, or, inevitably grows rich by the use of his faculties; by the union of thought with nature. Property is an intellectual production. The game requires coolness, right reasoning, promptness, and patience in the players. Cultivated labor drives out brute labor. An infinite number

of shrewd men, in infinite years, have arrived at certain best and shortest ways of doing, and this accumulated skill in arts, cultures, harvestings, curings, manufactures, navigations, exchanges, constitutes the worth of our world to-day.

Commerce is a game of skill, which every man cannot play, which few men can play well. The right merchant is one who has the just average of faculties we call *common-sense*; a man of a strong affinity for facts, who makes up his decision on what he has seen. He is thoroughly persuaded of the truths of arithmetic. There is always a reason, *in the man*, for his good or bad fortune, and so, in making money. Men talk as if there were some magic about this, and believe in magic, in all parts of life. He knows, that all goes on the old road, pound for pound, cent for cent, — for every effect a perfect cause, — and that good luck is another name for tenacity of purpose. He insures himself in every transaction, and likes small and sure gains. Probity and closeness to the facts are the basis, but the masters of the art add a certain long arithmetic. The problem is, to combine many and remote operations, with

the accuracy and adherence to the facts, which is easy in near and small transactions; so to arrive at gigantic results, without any compromise of safety. Napoleon was fond of telling the story of the Marseilles banker, who said to his visitor, surprised at the contrast between the splendor of the banker's château and hospitality, and the meanness of the counting-room in which he had seen him, — "Young man, you are too young to understand how masses are formed, — the true and only power, — whether composed of money, water, or men, it is all alike, — a mass is an immense centre of motion, but it must be begun, it must be kept up": — and he might have added, that the way in which it must be begun and kept up, is, by obedience to the law of particles.

Success consists in close appliance to the laws of the world, and, since those laws are intellectual and moral, an intellectual and moral obedience. Political Economy is as good a book wherein to read the life of man, and the ascendancy of laws over all private and hostile influences, as any Bible which has come down to us.

Money is representative, and follows the

nature and fortunes of the owner. The coin is a delicate meter of civil, social, and moral changes. The farmer is covetous of his dollar, and with reason. It is no waif to him. He knows how many strokes of labor it represents. His bones ache with the day's work that earned it. He knows how much land it represents; — how much rain, frost, and sunshine. He knows that, in the dollar, he gives you so much discretion and patience, so much hoeing and threshing. Try to lift his dollar; you must lift all that weight. In the city, where money follows the skit of a pen, or a lucky rise in exchange, it comes to be looked on as light. I wish the farmer held it dearer, and would spend it only for real bread; force for force.

The farmer's dollar is heavy, and the clerk's is light and nimble; leaps out of his pocket; jumps on to cards and faro-tables: but still more curious is its susceptibility to metaphysical changes. It is the finest barometer of social storms, and announces revolutions.

Every step of civil advancement makes every man's dollar worth more. In California, the country where it grew, — what would it buy? A few years since, it would

buy a shanty, dysentery, hunger, bad company, and crime. There are wide countries, like Siberia, where it would buy little else to-day, than some petty mitigation of suffering. In Rome, it will buy beauty and magnificence. Forty years ago, a dollar would not buy much in Boston. Now it will buy a great deal more in our old town, thanks to railroads, telegraphs, steamers, and the contemporaneous growth of New York, and the whole country. Yet there are many goods appertaining to a capital city, which are not yet purchasable here, no, not with a mountain of dollars. A dollar in Florida is not worth a dollar in Massachusetts. A dollar is not value, but representative of value, and, at last, of moral values. A dollar is rated for the corn it will buy, or to speak strictly, not for the corn or house-room, but for Athenian corn, and Roman house-room, — for the wit, probity, and power, which we eat bread and dwell in houses to share and exert. Wealth is mental; wealth is moral. The value of a dollar is, to buy just things: a dollar goes on increasing in value with all the genius, and all the virtue of the world. A dollar in a university is worth more than a dollar in a

jail; in a temperate, schooled, law-abiding community, than in some sink of crime, where dice, knives, and arsenic are in constant play.

The "Bank-Note Detector" is a useful publication. But the current dollar, silver or paper, is itself the detector of the right and wrong where it circulates. Is it not instantly enhanced by the increase of equity? If a trader refuses to sell his vote, or adheres to some odious right, he makes so much more equity in Massachusetts; and every acre in the State is more worth, in the hour of his action. If you take out of State Street the ten honestest merchants, and put in ten roguish persons, controlling the same amount of capital, — the rates of insurance will indicate it; the soundness of banks will show it; the highways will be less secure; the schools will feel it; the children will bring home their little dose of the poison; the judge will sit less firmly on the bench, and his decisions be less upright; he has lost so much support and constraint, — which all need; and the pulpit will betray it, in a laxer rule of life. An apple-tree, if you take out every day, for a number of days, a load of loam, and put in

a load of sand about its roots, will find it out. An apple-tree is a stupid kind of creature, but if this treatment be pursued for a short time, I think it would begin to mistrust something. And if you should take out of the powerful class engaged in trade a hundred good men, and put in a hundred bad, or, what is just the same thing, introduce a demoralizing institution, would not the dollar, which is not much stupider than an apple-tree, presently find it out? The value of a dollar is social, as it is created by society. Every man who removes into this city, with any purchasable talent or skill in him, gives to every man's labor in the city a new worth. If a talent is anywhere born into the world, the community of nations is enriched; and, much more, with a new degree of probity. The expense of crime, one of the principal charges of every nation, is so far stopped. In Europe, crime is observed to increase or abate with the price of bread. If the Rothschilds at Paris do not accept bills, the people at Manchester, at Paisley, at Birmingham, are forced into the highway, and landlords are shot down in Ireland. The police records attest it. The vibrations are presently felt in New York,

New Orleans, and Chicago. Not much otherwise, the economical power touches the masses through the political lords. Rothschild refuses the Russian loan, and there is peace, and the harvests are saved. He takes it, and there is war, and an agitation through a large portion of mankind, with every hideous result, ending in revolution, and a new order.

Wealth brings with it its own checks and balances. The basis of political economy is non-interference. The only safe rule is found in the self-adjusting meter of demand and supply. Do not legislate. Meddle, and you snap the sinews with your sumptuary laws. Give no bounties: make equal laws: secure life and property, and you need not give alms. Open the doors of opportunity to talent and virtue, and they will do themselves justice, and property will not be in bad hands. In a free and just commonwealth, property rushes from the idle and imbecile, to the industrious, brave, and persevering.

The laws of nature play through trade, as a toy-battery exhibits the effects of electricity. The level of the sea is not more surely kept, than is the equilibrium of value in society, by the demand and supply; and artifice or

legislation punishes itself, by reactions, gluts, and bankruptcies. The sublime laws play indifferently through atoms and galaxies. Whoever knows what happens in the getting and spending of a loaf of bread and a pint of beer; that no wishing will change the rigorous limits of pints and penny loaves; that, for all that is consumed, so much less remains in the basket and pot; but what is gone out of these is not wasted, but well spent, if it nourish his body, and enable him to finish his task;—knows all of political economy that the budgets of empires can teach him. The interest of petty economy is this symbolization of the great economy; the way in which a house, and a private man's methods, tally with the solar system, and the laws of give and take, throughout nature; and, however wary we are of the falsehoods and petty trinks which we suicidally play off on each other, every man has a certain satisfaction, whenever his dealing touches on the inevitable facts; when he sees that things themselves dictate the price, as they always tend to do, and, in large manufactures, are seen to do. Your paper is not fine or coarse enough, — is too heavy, or too thin. The manufacturer

says, he will furnish you with just that thickness or thinness you want; the pattern is quite indifferent to him; here is his schedule; — any variety of paper, as cheaper or dearer, with the prices annexed. A pound of paper costs so much, and you may have it made up in any pattern you fancy.

There is in all our dealings a self-regulation that supersedes chaffering. You will rent a house, but must have it cheap. The owner can reduce the rent, but so he incapacitates himself from making proper repairs, and the tenant gets not the house he would have, but a worse one; besides that, a relation a little injurious is established between landlord and tenant. You dismiss your laborer, saying, "Patrick, I shall send for you as soon as I cannot do without you." Patrick goes off contented, for he knows that the weeds will grow with the potatoes, the vines must be planted next week, and, however unwilling you may be, the cantelopes, crook-necks, and cucumbers will send for him. Who but must wish that all labor and value should stand on the same simple and surly market? If it is the best of its kind, it will. We must have joiner, locksmith, planter, priest, poet, doctor,

cook, weaver, ostler; each in turn, through the year.

If a St. Michael's pear sells for a shilling, it costs a shilling to raise it. If, in Boston, the best securities offer twelve per cent for money, they have just six per cent of insecurity. You may not see that the fine pear costs you a shilling, but it costs the community so much. The shilling represents the number of enemies the pear has, and the amount of risk in ripening it. The price of coal shows the narrowness of the coal-field, and a compulsory confinement of the miners to a certain district. All salaries are reckoned on contingent, as well as on actual services. "If the wind were always southwest by west," said the skipper, "women might take ships to sea." One might say, that all things are of one price; that nothing is cheap or dear; and that the apparent disparities that strike us are only a shopman's trick of concealing the damage in your bargain. A youth coming into the city from his native New Hampshire farm, with its hard fare still fresh in his remembrance, boards at a first-class hotel, and believes he must somehow have outwitted Dr. Franklin and Malthus, for luxuries are cheap. But he pays for the

one convenience of a better dinner, by the loss of some of the richest social and educational advantages. He has lost what guards! what incentives! He will perhaps find, by and by, that he left the Muses at the door of the hotel, and found the Furies inside. Money often costs too much, and power and pleasure are not cheap. The ancient poet said, "The gods sell all things at a fair price."

There is an example of the compensations in the commercial history of this country. When the European wars threw the carrying-trade of the world, from 1800 to 1812, into American bottoms, a seizure was now and then made of an American ship. Of course, the loss was serious to the owner, but the country was indemnified; for we charged threepence a pound for carrying cotton, sixpence for tobacco, and so on; which paid for the risk and loss, and brought into the country an immense prosperity, early marriages, private wealth, the building of cities, and of states; and, after the war was over, we received compensation over and above, by treaty, for all the seizures. Well, the Americans grew rich and great. But the pay-day comes round. Britain, France, and Germany, which our extraordinary profits

had impoverished, send out, attracted by the fame of our advantages, first their thousands, then their millions, of poor people, to share the crop. At first, we employ them, and increase our prosperity; but, in the artificial system of society and of protected labor, which we also have adopted and enlarged, there come presently checks and stoppages. Then we refuse to employ these poor men. But they will not so be answered. They go into the poor-rates, and, though we refuse wages, we must now pay the same amount in the form of taxes. Again, it turns out that the largest proportion of crimes are committed by foreigners. The cost of the crime, and the expense of courts, and of prisons, we must bear, and the standing army of preventive police we must pay. The cost of education of the posterity of this great colony I will not compute. But the gross amount of these costs will begin to pay back what we thought was a net gain from our transatlantic customers of 1800. It is vain to refuse this payment. We cannot get rid of these people, and we cannot get rid of their will to be supported. That has become an inevitable element of our politics; and, for their votes, each

of the dominant parties courts and assists them to get it executed. Moreover, we have to pay, not what would have contented them at home, but what they have learned to think necessary here ; so that opinion, fancy, and all manner of moral considerations complicate the problem.

There are a few measures of economy which will bear to be named without disgust ; for the subject is tender, and we may easily have too much of it ; and therein resembles the hideous animalcules of which our bodies are built up, — which, offensive in the particular, yet compose valuable and effective masses. Our nature and genius force us to respect ends, whilst we use means. We must use the means, and yet, in our most accurate using, somehow screen and cloak them, as we can only give them any beauty, by a reflection of the glory of the end. That is the good head, which serves the end, and commands the means. The rabble are corrupted by their means : the means are too strong for them, and they desert their end.

1. The first of these measures is that each man's expense must proceed from his character. As long as your genius buys, the in-

vestment is safe, though you spend like a monarch. Nature arms each man with some faculty which enables him to do easily some feat impossible to any other, and thus makes him necessary to society. This native determination guides his labor and his spending. He wants an equipment of means and tools proper to his talent. And to save on this point, were to neutralize the special strength and helpfulness of each mind. Do your work, respecting the excellence of the work, and not its acceptableness. This is so much economy, that, rightly read, it is the sum of economy. Profligacy consists not in spending years of time or chests of money, — but in spending them off the line of your career. The crime which bankrupts men and states is job-work; — declining from your main design, to serve a turn here or there. Nothing is beneath you, if it is in the direction of your life: nothing is great or desirable, if it is off from that. I think we are entitled here to draw a straight line, and say, that society can never prosper, but must always be bankrupt, until every man does that which he was created to do.

Spend for your expense, and retrench the expense which is not yours. Allston, the

painter, was wont to say, that he built a plain house, and filled it with plain furniture, because he would hold out no bribe to any to visit him, who had not similar tastes to his own. We are sympathetic, and, like children, want everything we see. But it is a large stride to independence, when a man, in the discovery of his proper talent, has sunk the necessity for false expenses. As the betrothed maiden, by one secure affection, is relieved from a system of slaveries, — the daily inculcated necessity of pleasing all, — so the man who has found what he can do, can spend on that, and leave all other spending. Montaigne said, “When he was a younger brother, he went brave in dress and equipage, but afterward his château and farms might answer for him.” Let a man who belongs to the class of nobles, those, namely, who have found out that they can do something, relieve himself of all vague squandering on objects not his. Let the realist not mind appearances. Let him delegate to others the costly courtesies and decorations of social life. The virtues are economists, but some of the vices are also. Thus, next to humility, I have noticed that pride is a pretty good husband. A good pride

is, as I reckon it, worth from five hundred to fifteen hundred a year. Pride is handsome, economical; pride eradicates so many vices, letting none subsist but itself, that it seems as if it were a great gain to exchange vanity for pride. Pride can go without domestics, without fine clothes, can live in a house with two rooms, can eat potato, purslain, beans, lyed corn, can work on the soil, can travel afoot, can talk with poor men, or sit silent well-contented in fine saloons. But vanity costs money, labor, horses, men, women, health, and peace, and is still nothing at last, a long way leading nowhere. Only one drawback; proud people are intolerably selfish, and the vain are gentle and giving.

Art is a jealous mistress, and, if a man have a genius for painting, poetry, music, architecture, or philosophy, he makes a bad husband, and an ill provider, and should be wise in season, and not fetter himself with duties which will imbitter his days, and spoil him for his proper work. We had in this region, twenty years ago, among our educated men, a sort of Arcadian fanaticism, a passionate desire to go upon the land, and unite farming to intellectual pursuits. Many effected their purpose,

and made the experiment, and some became downright ploughmen ; but all were cured of their faith that scholarship and practical farming (I mean, with one's own hands) could be united.

With brow bent, with firm intent, the pale scholar leaves his desk to draw a freer breath, and get a juster statement of his thought, in the garden-walk. He stoops to pull up a purslain, or a dock, that is choking the young corn, and finds there are two ; close behind the last is a third ; he reaches out his hand to a fourth ; behind that, are four thousand and one. He is heated and untuned, and, by and by, wakes up from his idiot dream of chickweed and red-root, to remember his morning thought, and to find, that, with his adamantine purposes, he has been duped by a dandelion. A garden is like those pernicious machineries we read of, every month, in the newspapers, which catch a man's coat-skirt or his hand, and draw in his arm, his leg, and his whole body to irresistible destruction. In an evil hour he pulled down his wall, and added a field to his homestead. No land is bad, but land is worse. If a man own land, the land owns him. Now let him leave home, if he dare. Every tree

and graft, every hill of melons, row of corn, or quickset hedge, all he has done, and all he means to do, stand in his way, like duns, when he would go out of his gate. The devotion to these vines and trees he finds poisonous. Long free walks, a circuit of miles, free his brain, and serve his body. Long marches are no hardship to him. He believes he composes easily on the hills. But this pottering in a few square yards of garden is dispiriting and drivelling. The smell of the plants has drugged him, and robbed him of energy. He finds a catalepsy in his bones. He grows peevish and poor-spirited. The genius of reading and of gardening are antagonistic, like resinous and vitreous electricity. One is concentrative in sparks and shocks: the other is diffuse strength; so that each disqualifies its workman for the other's duties.

An engraver whose hands must be of an exquisite delicacy of stroke should not lay stone-walls. Sir David Brewster gives exact instructions for microscopic observation: "Lie down on your back, and hold the single lens and object over your eye," etc., etc. How much more the seeker of abstract truth, who needs periods of isolation, and rapt con-

centration, and almost a going out of the body to think !

2. Spend after your genius, *and by system*. Nature goes by rule, not by sallies and salutations. There must be system in the economies. Saving and unexpensiveness will not keep the most pathetic family from ruin, nor will bigger incomes make free spending safe. The secret of success lies never in the amount of money, but in the relation of income to outgo ; as if, after expense has been fixed at a certain point, then new and steady rills of income, though never so small, being added, wealth begins. But in ordinary, as means increase, spending increases faster, so that large incomes, in England and elsewhere, are found not to help matters ; — the eating quality of debt does not relax its voracity. When the cholera is in the potato, what is the use of planting larger crops ? In England, the richest country in the universe, I was assured by shrewd observers that great lords and ladies had no more guineas to give away than other people ; that liberality with money is as rare and as immediately famous a virtue as it is here. Want is a growing giant whom the coat of Have was never large enough to

cover. I remember in Warwickshire to have been shown a fair manor, still in the same name as in Shakespeare's time. The rent-roll, I was told, is some fourteen thousand pounds a year: but, when the second son of the late proprietor was born, the father was perplexed how to provide for him. The eldest son must inherit the manor; what to do with this supernumerary? He was advised to breed him for the Church, and to settle him in the rectorship, which was in the gift of the family; which was done. It is a general rule in that country, that bigger incomes do not help anybody. It is commonly observed, that a sudden wealth, like a prize drawn in a lottery, or a large bequest to a poor family, does not permanently enrich. They have served no apprenticeship to wealth, and, with the rapid wealth, come rapid claims: which they do not know how to deny, and the treasure is quickly dissipated.

A system must be in every economy, or the best single expedients are of no avail. A farm is a good thing, when it begins and ends with itself, and does not need a salary, or a shop, to eke it out. Thus, the cattle are a main link in the chain-ring. If the

non-conformist or æsthetic farmer leaves out the cattle, and does not also leave out the want which the cattle must supply, he must fill the gap by begging or stealing. When men now alive were born, the farm yielded everything that was consumed on it. The farm yielded no money, and the farmer got on without. If he fell sick, his neighbors came in to his aid: each gave a day's work; or a half-day; or lent his yoke of oxen, or his horse, and kept his work even; hoed his potatoes, mowed his hay, reaped his rye; well knowing that no man could afford to hire labor, without selling his land. In autumn, a farmer could sell an ox or a hog, and get a little money to pay taxes withal. Now, the farmer buys almost all he consumes,—tin-ware, cloth, sugar, tea, coffee, fish, coal, railroad-tickets, and newspapers.

A master in each art is required, because the practice is never with still or dead subjects, but they change in your hands. You think farm-buildings and broad acres a solid property: but its value is flowing like water. It requires as much watching as if you were decanting wine from a cask. The farmer knows what to do with it, stops every leak,

turns all the streamlets to one reservoir, and decants wine: but a blunderhead comes out of Cornhill, tries his hand, and it all leaks away. So is it with granite streets, or timber townships, as with fruit or flowers. Nor is any investment so permanent, that it can be allowed to remain without incessant watching, as the history of each attempt to lock up an inheritance through two generations for an unborn inheritor may show.

When Mr. Cockayne takes a cottage in the country, and will keep his cow, he thinks a cow is a creature that is fed on hay, and gives a pail of milk twice a day. But the cow that he buys gives milk for three months; then her bag dries up. What to do with a dry cow? who will buy her? Perhaps he bought also a yoke of oxen to do his work; but they get blown and lame. What to do with blown and lame oxen? The farmer fats his, after the spring work is done, and kills them in the fall. But how can Cockayne, who has no pastures, and leaves his cottage daily in the cars, at business hours, be pothered with fattening and killing oxen? He plants trees; but there must be crops, to keep the trees in ploughed land. What shall be the crops?

He will have nothing to do with trees, but will have grass. After a year or two, the grass must be turned up and ploughed: now what crops? Credulous Cockayne!

3. Help comes in the custom of the country, and the rule of *Impéra parendo*. The rule is not to dictate, nor to insist on carrying out each of your schemes by ignorant wilfulness, but to learn practically the secret spoken from all nature, that things themselves refuse to be mismanaged, and will show to the watchful their own law. Nobody need stir hand or foot. The custom of the country will do it all. I know not how to build or to plant; neither how to buy wood, nor what to do with the house-lot, the field, or the wood-lot, when bought. Never fear: it is all settled how it shall be, long beforehand, in the custom of the country, whether to sand, or whether to clay it, when to plough, and how to dress, whether to grass, or to corn; and you cannot help or hinder it. Nature has her own best mode of doing each thing, and she has somewhere told it plainly, if we will keep our eyes and ears open. If not, she will not be slow in undeceiving us, when we prefer our own way to hers. How often we must

remember the art of the surgeon, which, in replacing the broken bone, contents itself with releasing the parts from false position; they fly into place by the action of the muscles. On this art of nature all our arts rely.

Of the two eminent engineers in the recent construction of railways in England, Mr. Brunel went straight from terminus to terminus, through mountains, over streams, crossing highways, cutting ducal estates in two, and shooting through this man's cellar, and that man's attic window, and so arriving at his end, at great pleasure to geometers, but with cost to his company. Mr. Stephenson, on the contrary, believing that the river knows the way, followed his valley, as implicitly as our Western Railroad follows the Westfield River, and turned out to be the safest and cheapest engineer. We say the cows laid out Boston. Well, there are worse surveyors. Every pedestrian in our pastures has frequent occasion to thank the cows for cutting the best path through the thicket, and over the hills; and travellers and Indians know the value of a buffalo-trail, which is sure to be the easiest possible pass through the ridge.

When a citizen, fresh from Dock Square, or Milk Street, comes out and buys land in the country, his first thought is to a fine outlook from his windows: his library must command a western view; a sunset every day, bathing the shoulder of Blue Hills, Wachusett, and the peaks of Monadnoc and Unca-noonuc. What, thirty acres, and all this magnificence for fifteen hundred dollars! It would be cheap at fifty thousand. He proceeds at once, his eyes dim with tears of joy, to fix the spot for his corner-stone. But the man who is to level the ground thinks it will take many hundred loads of gravel to fill the hollow to the road. The stone-mason who should build the well thinks he shall have to dig forty feet; the baker doubts he shall never like to drive up to the door; the practical neighbor cavils at the position of the barn; and the citizen comes to know that his predecessor the farmer built the house in the right spot for the sun and wind, the spring, and water-drainage, and the convenience to the pasture, the garden, the field, and the road. So Dock Square yields the point, and things have their own way. Use has made the farmer wise, and the foolish citizen learns

to take his counsel. From step to step he comes at last to surrender at discretion. The farmer affects to take his orders; but the citizen says, You may ask me as often as you will, and in what ingenious forms, for an opinion concerning the mode of building my wall, or sinking my well, or laying out my acre, but the ball will rebound to you. These are matters on which I neither know, nor need to know anything. These are questions which you and not I shall answer.

Not less, within doors, a system settles itself paramount and tyrannical over master and mistress, servant and child, cousin and acquaintance. 'Tis in vain that genius or virtue or energy of character strive and cry against it. This is fate. And 't is very well that the poor husband reads in a book of a new way of living, and resolves to adopt it at home: let him go home and try it, if he dare.

4. Another point of economy is to look for seed of the same kind as you sow; and not to hope to buy one kind with another kind. Friendship buys friendship; justice, justice; military merit, military success. Good husbandry finds wife, children, and household.

The good merchant large gains, ships, stocks, and money. The good poet fame, and literary credit; but not either, the other. Yet there is commonly a confusion of expectations on these points. Hotspur lives for the moment; praises himself for it; and despises Furlong, that he does not. Hotspur, of course, is poor; and Furlong a good provider. The odd circumstance is, that Hotspur thinks it a superiority in himself, this improvidence, which ought to be rewarded with Furlong's lands.

I have not at all completed my design. But we must not leave the topic, without casting one glance into the interior recesses. It is a doctrine of philosophy, that man is a being of degrees; that there is nothing in the world, which is not repeated in his body; his body being a sort of miniature or summary of the world: then that there is nothing in his body, which is not repeated as in a celestial sphere in his mind: then, there is nothing in his brain, which is not repeated in a higher sphere, in his moral system.

5. Now these things are so in Nature. All things ascend, and the royal rule of economy is, that it should ascend also, or, whatever

we do must always have a higher aim. Thus it is a maxim, that money is another kind of blood. *Pecunia alter sanguis*: or, the estate of a man is only a larger kind of body, and admits of regimen analogous to his bodily circulations. So there is no maxim of the merchant, e. g., "Best use of money is to pay debts"; "Every business by itself"; "Best time is present time"; "The right investment is in tools of your trade"; or the like, which does not admit of an extended sense. The counting-room maxims liberally expounded are laws of the Universe. The merchant's economy is a coarse symbol of the soul's economy. It is, to spend for power, and not for pleasure. It is to invest income; that is to say, to take up particulars into generals; days into integral eras, — literary, emotive, practical, of its life, and still to ascend in its investment. The merchant has but one rule, *absorb and invest*: he is to be capitalist; the scraps and filings must be gathered back into the crucible; the gas and smoke must be burned, and earnings must not go to increase expense, but to capital again. Well, the man must be capitalist. Will he spend his income, or will he invest?

His body and every organ is under the same law. His body is a jar, in which the liquor of life is stored. Will he spend for pleasure? The way to ruin is short and facile. Will he not spend, but hoard for power? It passes through the sacred fermentations, by that law of Nature whereby everything climbs to higher platforms, and bodily vigor becomes mental and moral vigor. The bread he eats is first strength and animal spirits: it becomes, in higher laboratories, imagery and thought; and in still higher results, courage and endurance. This is the right compound interest; this is capital doubled, quadrupled, centupled; man raised to his highest power.

The true thrift is always to spend on the higher plane; to invest and invest, with keener avarice, that he may spend in spiritual creation, and not in augmenting animal existence. Nor is the man enriched, in repeating the old experiments of animal sensation, nor unless through new powers and ascending pleasures, he knows himself by the actual experience of higher good, to be already on the way to the highest.







ILLUSIONS.

Flow, flow the waves hated,
Accursed, adored,
The waves of mutation :
No anchorage is.
Sleep is not, death is not ;
Who seem to die live.
House you were born in,
Friends of your spring-time,
Old man and young maid,
Day's toil and its guerdon,
They are all vanishing,
Fleeing to fables,
Cannot be moored.
See the stars through them,
Through treacherous marbles.
Know, the stars yonder,
The stars everlasting,
Are fugitive also,
And emulate, vaulted,
The lambent heat-lightning,
And fire-fly's flight.

ILLUSIONS.

When thou dost return
On the wave's circulation,
Beholding the shimmer,
The wild dissipation,
And, out of endeavor
To change and to flow,
The gas become solid,
And phantoms and nothings
Return to be things,
And endless imbroglio
Is law and the world, —
Then first shalt thou know,
That in the wild turmoil,
Horsed on the Proteus,
Thou ridest to power,
And to endurance.





ILLUSIONS.

SOME years ago, in company with an agreeable party, I spent a long summer day in exploring the Mammoth Cave in Kentucky. We traversed, through spacious galleries affording a solid masonry foundation for the town and county overhead, the six or eight black miles from the mouth of the cavern to the innermost recess which tourists visit, — a niche or grotto made of one seamless stalactite, and called, I believe, Serena's Bower. I lost the light of one day. I saw high domes, and bottomless pits; heard the voice of unseen waterfalls; paddled three quarters of a mile in the deep Echo River, whose waters are peopled with the blind fish; crossed the streams "Lethe" and "Styx"; plied with music and guns the echoes in these

alarming galleries ; saw every form of stalagmite and stalactite in the sculptured and fretted chambers, — icicle, orange-flower, acanthus, grapes, and snowball. We shot Bengal lights into the vaults and groins of the sparry cathedrals, and examined all the masterpieces which the four combined engineers, water, limestone, gravitation, and time, could make in the dark.

The mysteries and scenery of the cave had the same dignity that belongs to all natural objects, and which shames the fine things to which we foppishly compare them. I remarked, especially, the mimetic habit, with which Nature, on new instruments, hums her old tunes, making night to mimic day, and chemistry to ape vegetation. But I then took notice, and still chiefly remember, that the best thing which the cave had to offer was an illusion. On arriving at what is called the “Star-Chamber,” our lamps were taken from us by the guide, and extinguished or put aside, and, on looking upwards, I saw or seemed to see the night heaven thick with stars glimmering more or less brightly over our heads, and even what seemed a comet flaming among them. All the party were touched with astonishment and

pleasure. Our musical friends sung with much feeling a pretty song, "The stars are in the quiet sky," etc., and I sat down on the rocky floor to enjoy the serene picture. Some crystal specks in the black ceiling high overhead, reflecting the light of a half-hid lamp, yielded this magnificent effect.

I own, I did not like the cave so well for eking out its sublimities with this theatrical trick. But I have had many experiences like it, before and since; and we must be content to be pleased without too curiously analyzing the occasions. Our conversation with Nature is not just what it seems. The cloud-rack, the sunrise and sunset glories, rainbows, and northern lights are not quite so spherulal as our childhood thought them; and the part our organization plays in them is too large. The senses interfere everywhere, and mix their own structure with all they report of. Once, we fancied the earth a plane, and stationary. In admiring the sunset, we do not yet deduct the rounding, co-ordinating, pictorial powers of the eye.

The same interference from our organization creates the most of our pleasure and pain. Our first mistake is the belief that the circum-

stance gives the joy which we give to the circumstance. Life is an ecstasy. Life is sweet as nitrous oxide; and the fisherman dripping all day over a cold pond, the switchman at the railway intersection, the farmer in the field, the negro in the rice-swamp, the fop in the street, the hunter in the woods, the barrister with the jury, the belle at the ball, all ascribe a certain pleasure to their employment, which they themselves give it. Health and appetite impart the sweetness to sugar, bread, and meat. We fancy that our civilization has got on far, but we still come back to our primers.

We live by our imaginations, by our admirations, by our sentiments. The child walks amid heaps of illusions, which he does not like to have disturbed. The boy, how sweet to him is his fancy! how dear the story of barons and battles! What a hero he is, whilst he feeds on his heroes! What a debt is his to imaginative books! He has no better friend or influence, than Scott, Shakspeare, Plutarch, and Homer. The man lives to other objects, but who dare affirm that they are more real? Even the prose of the streets is full of refractions. In the life of the dreariest alderman, fancy

enters into all details, and colors them with rosy hue. He imitates the air and actions of people whom he admires, and is raised in his own eyes. He pays a debt quicker to a rich man than to a poor man. He wishes the bow and compliment of some leader in the state, or in society; weighs what he says; perhaps he never comes nearer to him for that, but dies at last better contented for this amusement of his eyes and his fancy.

The world rolls, the din of life is never hushed. In London, in Paris, in Boston, in San Francisco, the carnival, the masquerade is at its height. Nobody drops his domino. The unities, the fictions of the piece it would be an impertinence to break. The chapter of fascinations is very long. Great is paint; nay, God is the painter; and we rightly accuse the critic who destroys too many illusions. Society does not love its unmaskers. It was wittily, if somewhat bitterly, said by D'Alembert, "*qu'un état de vapeur était un état très fâcheux, parcequ'il nous faisait voir les choses comme elles sont.*" I find men victims of illusion in all parts of life. Children, youths, adults, and old men, all are led by one bawble or another. Yoganidra, the goddess of illusion, Proteus, or

Momus, or Gylfi's Mocking, — for the Power has many names, — is stronger than the Titans, stronger than Apollo. Few have overheard the gods, or surprised their secret. Life is a succession of lessons which must be lived to be understood. All is riddle, and the key to a riddle is another riddle. There are as many pillows of illusion as flakes in a snow-storm. We wake from one dream into another dream. The toys, to be sure, are various, and are graduated in refinement to the quality of the dupe. The intellectual man requires a fine bait; the sots are easily amused. But everybody is drugged with his own frenzy, and the pageant marches at all hours, with music and banner and badge.

Amid the joyous troop who give in to the charivari, comes now and then a sad-eyed boy, whose eyes lack the requisite refractions to clothe the show in due glory, and who is afflicted with a tendency to trace home the glittering miscellany of fruits and flowers to one root. Science is a search after identity, and the scientific whim is lurking in all corners. At the State Fair, a friend of mine complained that all the varieties of fancy pears in our orchards seem to have been selected by some-

body who had a whim for a particular kind of pear, and only cultivated such as had that perfume; they were all alike. And I remember the quarrel of another youth with the confectioners, that, when he racked his wit to choose the best comfits in the shops, in all the endless varieties of sweetmeat he could only find three flavors, or two. What then? Pears and cakes are good for something; and because you, unluckily, have an eye or nose too keen, why need you spoil the comfort which the rest of us find in them? I knew a humorist, who, in a good deal of rattle, had a grain or two of sense. He shocked the company by maintaining that the attributes of God were two, — power and risibility; and that it was the duty of every pious man to keep up the comedy. And I have known gentlemen of great stake in the community, but whose sympathies were cold, — presidents of colleges, and governors, and senators, — who held themselves bound to sign every temperance pledge, and act with Bible societies, and missions, and peace-makers, and cry *Hist-a-boy!* to every good dog. We must not carry comity too far, but we all have kind impulses in this direction. When the boys come into my yard for leave to gather horse-

chestnuts, I own I enter into Nature's game, and affect to grant the permission reluctantly, fearing that any moment they will find out the imposture of that showy chaff. But this tenderness is quite unnecessary; the enchantments are laid on very thick. Their young life is thatched with them. Bare and grim to tears is the lot of the children in the hovel I saw yesterday; yet not the less they hung it round with frippery romance, like the children of the happiest fortune, and talked of "the dear cottage where so many joyful hours had flown." Well, this thatching of hovels is the custom of the country. Women, more than all, are the element and kingdom of illusion. Being fascinated, they fascinate. They see through Claude-Lorraines. And how dare any one, if he could, pluck away the *coulisses*, stage effects, and ceremonies, by which they live? Too pathetic, too pitiable, is the region of affection, and its atmosphere always liable to *mirage*.

We are not very much to blame for our bad marriages. We live amid hallucinations; and this especial trap is laid to trip up our feet with, and all are tripped up first or last. But the mighty Mother who had been so sly

with us, as if she felt that she owed us some indemnity, insinuates into the Pandora-box of marriage some deep and serious benefits, and some great joys. We find a delight in the beauty and happiness of children, that makes the heart too big for the body. In the worst-assorted connections there is ever some mixture of true marriage. Teague and his jade get some just relations of mutual respect, kindly observation, and fostering of each other, learn something, and would carry themselves wiser, if they were now to begin.

'Tis fine for us to point at one or another fine madman, as if there were any exempts. The scholar in his library is none. I, who have all my life heard any number of orations and debates, read poems and miscellaneous books, conversed with many geniuses, am still the victim of any new page; and, if Marmaduke, or Hugh, or Moosehead, or any other, invent a new style of mythology, I fancy that the world will be all brave and right, if dressed in these colors, which I had not thought of. Then at once I will daub with this new paint; but it will not stick. 'Tis like the cement which the pedler sells at the door; he makes broken crockery hold with it, but you can

never buy of him a bit of the cement which will make it hold when he is gone.

Men who make themselves felt in the world avail themselves of a certain fate in their constitution, which they know how to use. But they never deeply interest us, unless they lift a corner of the curtain, or betray never so slightly their penetration of what is behind it. 'T is the charm of practical men, that outside of their practicality are a certain poetry and play, as if they led the good horse Power by the bridle, and preferred to walk, though they can ride so fiercely. Bonaparte is intellectual, as well as Cæsar; and the best soldiers, sea-captains, and railway-men have a gentleness, when off duty; a good-natured admission that there are illusions, and who shall say that he is not their sport? We stigmatize the cast-iron fellows, who cannot so detach themselves, as "dragon-ridden," "thunder-stricken," and fools of fate, with whatever powers endowed.

Since our tuition is through emblems and indirections, 't is well to know that there is method in it, a fixed scale, and rank above rank in the phantasms. We begin low with coarse masks, and rise to the most subtle and beautiful. The red men told Columbus, "they had

an herb which took away fatigue"; but he found the illusion of "arriving from the east at the Indies" more composing to his lofty spirit than any tobacco. Is not our faith in the impenetrability of matter more sedative than narcotics? You play with jackstraws, balls, bowls, horse and gun, estates and politics; but there are finer games before you. Is not time a pretty toy? Life will show you masks that are worth all your carnivals. Yonder mountain must migrate into your mind. The fine star-dust and nebulous blur in Orion, "the portentous year of Mizar and Alcor," must come down and be dealt with in your household thought. What if you shall come to discern that the play and playground of all this pompous history are radiations from yourself, and that the sun borrows his beams? What terrible questions we are learning to ask! The former men believed in magic, by which temples, cities, and men were swallowed up, and all trace of them gone. We are coming on the secret of a magic which sweeps out of men's minds all vestige of theism and beliefs which they and their fathers held and were framed upon.

There are deceptions of the senses, decep-

tions of the passions, and the structural, beneficent illusions of sentiment and of the intellect. There is the illusion of love, which attributes to the beloved person all which that person shares with his or her family, sex, age, or condition, nay, with the human mind itself. 'Tis these which the lover loves, and Anna Matilda gets the credit of them. As if one shut up always in a tower, with one window, through which the face of heaven and earth could be seen, should fancy that all the marvels he beheld belonged to that window. There is the illusion of time, which is very deep; who has disposed of it? or come to the conviction that what seems the *succession* of thought is only the distribution of wholes into causal series? The intellect sees that every atom carries the whole of Nature; that the mind opens to omnipotence; that, in the endless striving and ascents, the metamorphosis is entire, so that the soul doth not know itself in its own act, when that act is perfected. There is illusion that shall deceive even the elect. There is illusion that shall deceive even the performer of the miracle. Though he make his body, he denies that he makes it. Though the world exist from thought, thought is daunt-

ed in presence of the world. One after the other we accept the mental laws, still resisting those which follow, which however must be accepted. But all our concessions only compel us to new profusion. And what avails it that science has come to treat space and time as simply forms of thought, and the material world as hypothetical, and withal our pretension of *property* and even of self-hood are fading with the rest, if, at last, even our thoughts are not finalities; but the incessant flowing and ascension reach these also, and each thought which yesterday was a finality, to-day is yielding to a larger generalization?

With such volatile elements to work in, 't is no wonder if our estimates are loose and floating. We must work and affirm, but we have no guess of the value of what we say or do. The cloud is now as big as your hand, and now it covers a county. That story of Thor, who was set to drain the drinking-horn in Asgard, and to wrestle with the old woman, and to run with the runner Lok, and presently found that he had been drinking up the sea, and wrestling with Time, and racing with Thought, describes us who are contending, amid these seeming

trifles, with the supreme energies of Nature. We fancy we have fallen into bad company and squalid condition, low debts, shoe-bills, broken glass to pay for, pots to buy, butcher's meat, sugar, milk, and coal. "Set me some great task, ye gods! and I will show my spirit." "Not so," says the good Heaven; "plod and plough, vamp your old coats and hats, weave a shoestring; great affairs and the best wine by and by." Well, 't is all phantasm; and if we weave a yard of tape in all humility, and as well as we can, long hereafter we shall see it was no cotton tape at all, but some galaxy which we braided, and that the threads were Time and Nature.

We cannot write the order of the variable winds. How can we penetrate the law of our shifting moods and susceptibility? Yet they differ as all and nothing. Instead of the firmament of yesterday, which our eyes require, it is to-day an eggshell which coops us in; we cannot even see what or where our stars of destiny are. From day to day, the capital facts of human life are hidden from our eyes. Suddenly the mist rolls up, and reveals them, and we think how much good time is gone, that might have been saved, had any hint of

these things been shown. A sudden rise in the road shows us the system of mountains, and all the summits, which have been just as near us all the year, but quite out of mind. But these alternations are not without their order, and we are parties to our various fortune. If life seem a succession of dreams, yet poetic justice is done in dreams also. The visions of good men are good; it is the undisciplined will that is whipped with bad thoughts and bad fortunes. When we break the laws, we lose our hold on the central reality. Like sick men in hospitals, we change only from bed to bed, from one folly to another; and it cannot signify much what becomes of such castaways, — wailing, stupid, comatose creatures, — lifted from bed to bed, from the nothing of life to the nothing of death.

In this kingdom of illusions we grope eagerly for stays and foundations. There is none but a strict and faithful dealing at home, and a severe barring out of all duplicity or illusion there. Whatever games are played with us, we must play no games with ourselves, but deal in our privacy with the last honesty and truth. I look upon the simple and childish virtues of veracity and honesty as the root of

all that is sublime in character. Speak as you think, be what you are, pay your debts of all kinds. I prefer to be owned as sound and solvent, and my word as good as my bond, and to be what cannot be skipped, or dissipated, or undermined, to all the *éclat* in the universe. This reality is the foundation of friendship, religion, poetry, and art. At the top or at the bottom of all illusions, I set the cheat which still leads us to work and live for appearances, in spite of our conviction, in all sane hours, that it is what we really are that avails with friends, with strangers, and with fate or fortune.

One would think, from the talk of men, that riches and poverty were a great matter; and our civilization mainly respects it. But the Indians say that they do not think the white man with his brow of care, always toiling, afraid of heat and cold, and keeping within doors, has any advantage of them. The permanent interest of every man is, never to be in a false position, but to have the weight of Nature to back him in all that he does. Riches and poverty are a thick or thin costume; and our life—the life of all of us—identical. For we transcend the circumstance continually,

and taste the real quality of existence; as in our employments, which only differ in the manipulations, but express the same laws; or in our thoughts, which wear no silks, and taste no ice-creams. We see God face to face every hour, and know the savor of Nature.

The early Greek philosophers Heraclitus and Xenophanes measured their force on this problem of identity. Diogenes of Apollonia said, that unless the atoms were made of one stuff, they could never blend and act with one another. But the Hindoos, in their sacred writings, express the liveliest feeling, both of the essential identity, and of that illusion which they conceive variety to be. "The notions, '*I am,*' and '*This is mine,*' which influence mankind, are but delusions of the mother of the world. Dispel, O Lord of all creatures! the conceit of knowledge which proceeds from ignorance." And the beatitude of man they hold to lie in being freed from fascination.

The intellect is stimulated by the statement of truth in a trope, and the will by clothing the laws of life in illusions. But the unities of Truth and of Right are not broken by the disguise. There need never be any confusion in these. In a crowded life of many parts and

performers, on a stage of nations, or in the obscure hamlet in Maine or California, the same elements offer the same choices to each new-comer, and, according to his election, he fixes his fortune in absolute Nature. It would be hard to put more mental and moral philosophy than the Persians have thrown into a sentence: —

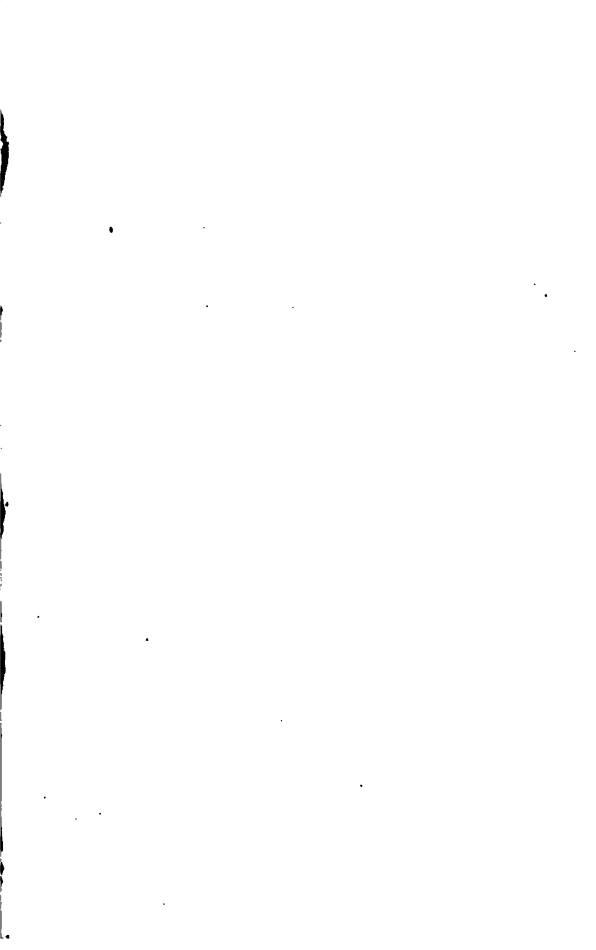
“ Fooled thou must be, though wisest of the wise :
Then be the fool of virtue, not of vice.”

There is no chance, and no anarchy, in the universe. All is system and gradation. Every god is there sitting in his sphere. The young mortal enters the hall of the firmament: there is he alone with them alone, they pouring on him benedictions and gifts, and beckoning him up to their thrones. On the instant, and incessantly, fall snow-storms of illusions. He fancies himself in a vast crowd which sways this way and that, and whose movement and doings he must obey; he fancies himself poor, orphaned, insignificant. The mad crowd drives hither and thither, now furiously commanding this thing to be done, now that. What is he that he should resist their will, and think or act for himself? Every moment, new changes,

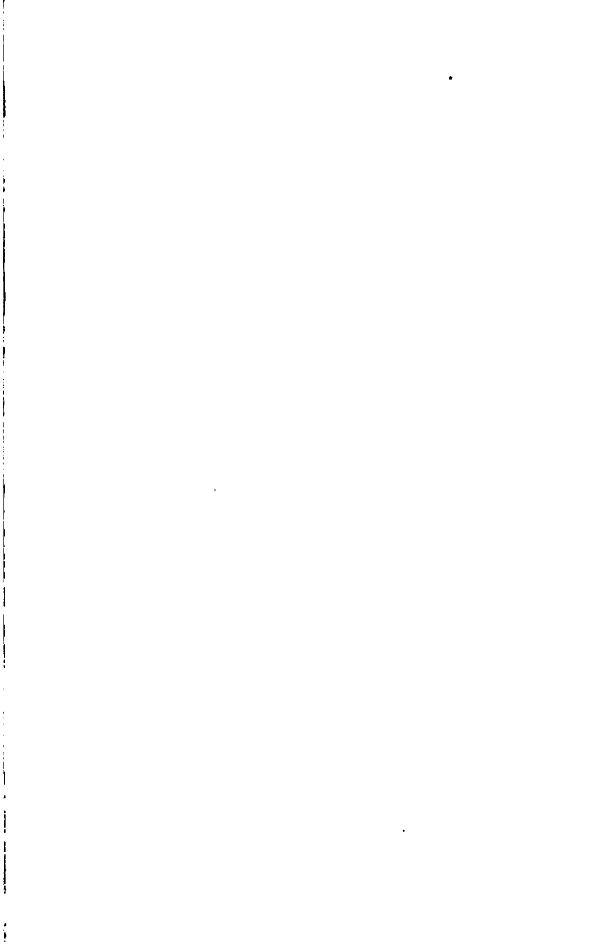
and new showers of deceptions, to baffle and distract him. And when, by and by, for an instant, the air clears, and the cloud lifts a little, there are the gods still sitting around him on their thrones, — they alone with him alone.











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